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HER BOOK

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MARY BOYLE

HER BOOK

EDITED BY SIR COURTENAY BOYLE, K.C.B.

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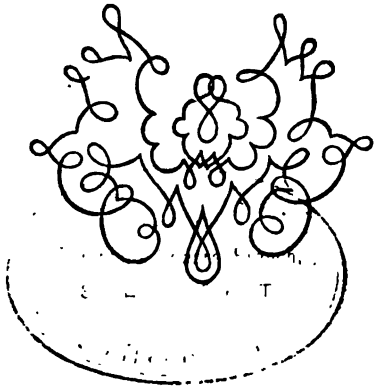

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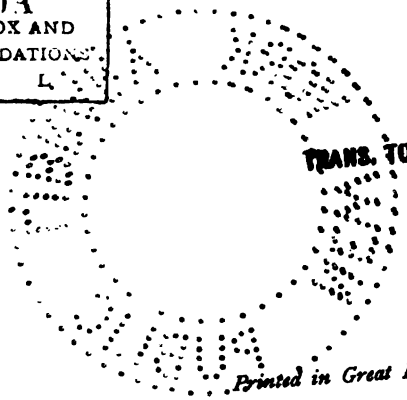

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TO

MY TWO WELL-BELOVED COUSINS

GERTRUDE (COUNTESS OF KENMARE)

AND

LADY SARAH SPENCER

WHOSE HEARTS, HANDS AND HOMES ARE EVER OPEN TO ME,
THESE PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY

MARY BOYLE
("VANESSA")

SEP 1926

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THESE sketches of my dear aunt's life were begun by her only a few years before she died. The discretion as to their publication was left to those on whose judgment she relied, and at their request I have undertaken to prepare the sketches for presentation to the public, and to add to them here and there a few explanatory notes of my own.

I have left her chapters almost exactly as she wrote them. They are well described in her Preface, and are very characteristic of herself. Like a light-winged butterfly she flits from flower to flower, resting long on none, nor caring to return to what she had apparently only quitted for a moment. As is natural to one writing after a lapse of years, she refers within the space of a page or two to events which happened at wide intervals of time.

She dwells with pardonable pride on her love for the drama and the dance. Those who knew well her proficiency in these will prefer to let their memory rest on the brilliant wit and imperturbable good nature which made her a welcome guest in many societies. As a girl she had many opportunities of sharing in the Court

life of her own country and more than one continental state. Later she became intimate with literary men of the highest position. All through her life she had the *entrée* to many pleasant country-houses, in which were gathered men of influence in affairs, and clever and amusing women full of knowledge of the events of the society in which they moved. She was everywhere popular, and this was not a little due to the fact that she hated scandal and eschewed gossip. She could not be ill-natured if she chose. Probably the severest thing she ever uttered was said of a young man who, seeking a greater prominence than he deserved, had somehow trodden on her toes. "Well, but, Mary, you must at any rate admit that he is a good mimic." "Is he? then I wish he would always imitate some one else." I have reason to believe she even repented this.

In my father's house there was ever a room allotted to her and known by her name. It was occasionally my privilege to occupy it, and to read her collection of volumes of many sorts and many styles. It was there that I read much of Landor, Browning and Mrs Browning and all, or nearly all, the novels of G. P. R. James, whom she called her literary godfather, and whose influence is traceable in her novels of "A State Prisoner" and "The Foresters."

With my father's children, when we were children, she was the object of the keenest admiration and the warmest love. She joyed in our joys, and soothed our sorrows with unfailing tact. In later years it was a source of no little regret to us that her roving life and

somewhat restless disposition deprived us of some opportunities of returning the care she lavished on us when we were young.

I am probably not alone in wishing that she had written more than she did. The two novels to which I have referred have nothing to lose in comparison with those of later writers, who have had a far wider circulation than she. Graceful and graphic, they are marked by a purity of plot and a delicacy of taste which make no attempt to season pleasure with offence. She was not of those who consider it impossible to interest or amuse without the introduction if not of that which is unclean, at least of that which is bizarre. Later in life she produced a short sketch of character called "Tangled Weft," which probably would have been more widely read had it been less refined.[1]

A kindly critic in the *Athenæum* of April 1890, immediately after her death, described her conversation as having a charm that was indescribable and perhaps unique. This was probably so. In her, judgment and good sense were as solid as her shafts of wit were keen. She never was the victim, happily for her, of the unreasoning adulation, which so cruelly affected the last years of the life of the most humorous as well as the wittiest Irishman whom it has ever been my good fortune to meet. I knew Father Healy when his life was spent among his friends. I knew him also when he was the

[1] She also wrote a small volume of Poems, "My Portrait Gallery and other Poems." Dedicated to Walter Savage Landor. Privately printed in London, 1849.

idol of a flattering throng, who knew not what they worshipped. Often have I seen him crushed into silence by the persistence of admirers who would never let him utter three words on any subject without beginning to laugh before he could get out with the fourth. Mary Boyle, perhaps because she frequented the society of only those who were friends, was not expected to drop pearls whenever she spoke.

In her letters it is possible that an equal charm might be found. But it would require some patience in seeking; for her handwriting had undoubted peculiarities. "We had a committee on your letter, dear Mary," once wrote an intimate friend. "We placed it on a table and sat round it, and by dint of looking at it from every point of view we really made out a good deal." Notwithstanding the difficulty, however, some of those who, like Charles Dickens, Lord Tennyson, and Browning, loved to correspond with her, kept up an exchange of letters which ended only with death.

If my aunt had lived to finish these chapters, the title she desired to apply to them might have been appropriate. As it is, they can scarcely be considered an autobiography. There are lacking, too, references to several houses[1] where she was a frequent guest, and to many circles of friends whose gatherings she helped to make merry. I miss, especially, allusions to Ireland, and above all to that happy shore, "washed by the farthest" lake, where to my knowledge she spent many days of unalloyed enjoyment. Her close friendship with Lady

[1] *See* Supplementary Chapter.

Marian Alford, the "your Marian" of Lord Tennyson's verses, is not mentioned.[1] But of the society which Lady Marian loved to gather around her Mary Boyle was a welcome member. It was at Ashridge that some years before the present Bishop of Ely put on Lawn there flashed forth one of those keen answers with which she often delighted her hearers. They were discussing some important point of High Church—Low Church—Moderate Church. As luncheon was announced a prudent critic of the discussion said, "Well, after all, it is very true that *via media securum iter*." "You don't know what that means, Mary?" "Oh, yes, I do! that is what Lord Alwynne says, 'caution is the way to secure a mitre.'"

After my father's death in 1868 Mary Boyle established herself in a small house in South Audley Street. James Russell Lowell, one of the many brilliant men who both got and gave pleasure by a visit to her tiny rooms, says of it: "No knock could surprise the modest door of what she called her *bonbonnière*, for it opened and still opens to let in as many distinguished persons, and what is better, as many devoted friends as any in London." This was written in 1888, the last year of her occupancy, and two years before her death. "Miss Mary Boyle," he goes on to say, "bears no discoverable relation to dates. As nobody ever knew how old the Countess of Desmond was, so nobody can tell how young Miss Mary Boyle is. However long she may live, hers can never be that most dismal of fates to outlive her friends while cheerfulness,

[1] *See* Supplementary Chapter.

kindliness, cleverness, and all the other good nesses have anything to do with the making of them." She certainly had the faculty, a somewhat rare one, of making as well as keeping friends. I have met in the wee chamber, which she was wont to call a drawing-room, men of three generations all coming within the category to which Mr Lowell refers.

Nor were her guests all of one sex. Neither her cleverness nor her kindliness alone would have sufficed to keep the friendship of the many women who loved her till her death. Together they did. So her rooms were filled with those who were lovely and brilliant as well as those who were learned and clever. The friendship which Mary Boyle maintained with men of distinction in many spheres of life lasted for a long period of years. Mr Lowell in the passage I have quoted was preparing for publication some letters which were written to her by Walter Savage Landor.[1] Those who wish to read these letters in full may find them in the *Century Magazine* for February 1888. "They are most interesting," says Lowell, "and have more clearly the stamp of the writer's character than many of Goethe's to the Frau von Stein. They give an amiable picture of him without his armour and in an undress, though never a careless or slovenly one." They are too long to be set out at length here, but I may cite a few brief passages. The opening sentence of the first especially commends itself to me. Lowell thinks it was written in 1842:

"Your letter is a most delightful ramble. I believe I must come and be your writing-master. Certainly if I

[1] *See* Supplementary Chapter.

"THE BONBONNIÈRE," 22 SOUTH AUDLEY STREET.

[*To face page* xiv.

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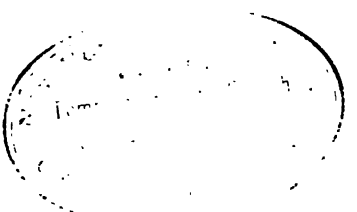


did nothing else by drilling, I should make rank and file stand closer." . . . "You ask me if I have ever seen Burleigh? Yes, nearly half a century ago. Nevertheless I have not forgotten its magnificence. No place ever struck me so forcibly. And then the grounds!" . . .

"And so, Carissima, you want to know whether I shall be *glad* to see you or *sorry* to see you on the twentieth. Well then—sorry—to *have* seen you, glad, exultingly glad, to see you. And now I am resolved not to tell you which I love best, Melcha or Mora.[1] Melcha colpisce fortemente—Mora piu ancora s'innamora: I have broken my word to myself all through you." . . . "You see I have learnt to write from you—only I can sometimes get three or four words into a line—which you can never do for the life of you. But there are several in which I find two entire ones. I do not like to spoil the context, otherwise I would order them to be glazed and framed in gold." . . .

"It is only this evening that I received the *Bridal of Melcha*. I do not like to be an echo, but I am certain that I must be one in expressing my admiration of it. To-night is our Fancy Ball. You should be at it crowned with myrtle and bay. If I had opened the volume, but at the very hour of meeting my friends there, I could not have refrained from reading it through before I set out. It is indeed already late enough, and I suspect past the post-office hour, adieu, Musa Grazia! and call me in future anything but Dottissimo. Remember, you have a choice of Issimi." . . .

[1] Names of two characters in a poetical drama, which she wrote, called the *Bridal of Melcha*.

"It would grieve me to see religion and education taken out of the hands of gentlemen and turned altogether, as it is in part, into those of the uneducated and vulgar. I would rather see my own house pulled down than a Cathedral. But if Bishops are to sit in the House of Lords as Barons, voting against no corruption, against no cruelty, not even the slave-trade, the people ere long will knock them on the head. Conservative I am, but no less am I an *aristocratic radical* like yourself. I would eradicate all that vitiates our constitution in Church and State, making room for the gradual growth of what altering times require, but preserving the due ranks and orders of society, and even to a much greater degree than most of the violent Tories are doing."

. . . She was associated with Tennyson, Wordsworth, and Landor in a small miscellany which Lord Northampton encouraged and edited in aid of the surviving family of Edward Smedley. Her contribution, "My Father's at the Helm," attracted a considerable amount of attention, and achieved some popularity. Better judges than myself encourage me to reproduce it:

"The hurricane was at its worst,
The waves dashed mountains high,
When from a gallant ship there burst
A loud despairing cry.

The Captain's son sat on the deck,
A young and lovely child,
And when the crew foreboded wreck,
He shook his head and smiled.

'Mid groans of care and deep despair
And manhood's bitter tear,
That gentle boy, all hope and joy,
Betrayed no signs of fear.

A mariner, who strove in vain
To nerve his troubled soul,
Thought of his wife and babes with pain,
Nor could his fears control—

Approached the boy and with a loud
And rough defiant tone,
'Tell me, and art thou then endowed
With courage all thine own?

Dar'st thou defy or doubt the sky
Hath power to overwhelm?'
The gentle child looked up and smiled
'My father's at the helm.'

Oh, could we think as that blest child,
Whilst wandering here below,
We should not dread the tempest wild,
The storm of human woe!

The waves of misery might dash
Above our little bark,
And human wrath like lightning flash
Then leave our life track dark!

His soul all calm, no thoughts of harm
The Christian overwhelm,
Firm in the thought with safety fraught
His Father's at the helm."

Later in life she printed, for a limited circulation only, Historical and Biographical Catalogues of the Pictures at Longleat, Hinchingbrooke, Panshanger and Westonbirt, to

which Lowell was probably right in attributing a serious value.

Of all her writings it may be said that their chief charm consists in their reproduction of herself. Standing alone they would have stood strongly. They were meant for her friends, and to her friends, who were many, they conveyed a pleasure which was largely due to connection easily traceable between what was written and her who wrote.

The marriage in 1884 of her niece Audrey, the only daughter of my uncle Charles, with Hallam Tennyson, increased the already keen friendship between her and our last great poet. How intimate it was and how much he valued it, may be gathered even by him who runs, from the stanzas which he sent to her with one of his latest poems. She received them in the spring of 1888 when still mourning the death of her friend Lady Marian Alford.

SPRING-FLOWERS.

"While you still delay to take
Your leave of town,
Our elm tree's ruddy-hearted blossom-flake
Is fluttering down.

Be truer to your promise. There! I heard
One cuckoo call.
Be needle to the magnet of your word,
Nor wait, till all

Our vernal bloom from every vale and plain
And garden pass,
And all the gold from each laburnum chain
Drop to the grass.

Is memory with your Marian gone to rest,
Dead with the dead?
For ere she left us, when we met, you prest
My hand, and said

'I come with your spring-flowers!' You came not, friend;
My birds would sing,
You heard not. Take then this spring-flower I send,
This song of spring.

. . . . . .

And you that now are lonely, and with grief
Sit face to face,
Might find a flickering glimmer of relief
In change of place.

What use to brood? This mingled life of pains
And joys to me,
Despite of every Faith and Creed, remains
The Mystery.

. . . . . .

The silver year should cease to mourn and sigh—
Not long to wait—
So close are we, dear Mary, you and I
To that dim gate."

Close indeed were they both "to that dim gate." She died in April 1890—and in 1892 the great writer, and the still more kindly man, answered the "one clear call," and embarked to "meet his Pilot face to face."

Thus far Sir Courtenay Boyle had written his Introduction to the Memoirs when to him also came the "one clear call," and he too embarked to "meet his Pilot face to face."[1]

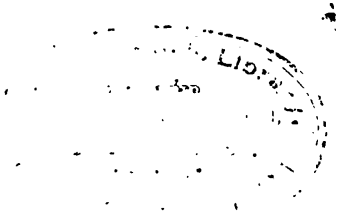
[1] Sir Courtenay Boyle died 19th May 1901.

The papers which now form the Supplementary Chapter arrived too late. It was his intention to have incorporated them in the book, and they would doubtless have necessitated some slight modification in his Introduction. I have preferred to leave his work as he left it, and keep the supplementary papers separate.

MURIEL S. BOYLE.

September 1901.

Courtenay Lyle



PREFACE

I HOPE my readers, whether gentle or simple, will do me the favour to read this Preface, as I wish to explain a little, perhaps apologise a little, after the usual fashion of people who write their reminiscences. According to custom, I had better begin by stating that it was at the instigation of many personal friends, some of them men of literary tastes and distinction, that I overcame my cowardice to embark on what appeared to me a most hazardous enterprise; but one in which I have found so much pleasure and relaxation—during hours of failing health and growing blindness—that I have often been tempted to say, "Oh that these pages might amuse the reader half as much as they have done the writer." The choice of a title, which, as Mr Motley in one of his delightful letters says, ought to be "selling and telling" occupied me for a very short time, as far as I myself was concerned. The name of "Vanessa" was endeared to me by old recollections, for I had gained that *sobriquet* on one occasion, when a goodly troop of friends and relations was assembled in the country-house of a dear cousin.

These companions "who did converse and waste the

time together," enrolled themselves into a band and gave each other fanciful, and as they considered at the time, appropriate names, or nicknames, what the Italians might call Ottias. For instance, a much-loved member of my family, "who looked well to the ways of her household," and "ate not the bread of idleness," was christened "Melissa," or the working-bee; another, whose short-sight was one of his only shortcomings, was dubbed "Belisarius," while I was unanimously hailed as "Vanessa," or the Butterfly.

This circumstance, coupled with the love I had for all that was bright, variegated, motley, for bright colours, bright flowers, bright scenes, bright sunshine, made me resolve on the "Autobiography of a Butterfly." More than one friend argued against my choice, saying it conveyed a wrong impression of my character and ways of thinking, inasmuch as it sounded frivolous and superficial, but I do not think so; it appears to me that the joyous flittings of a butterfly through a summer garden give rather a suitable notion of a wandering, chequered life, replete with light and happiness, or to make use of another metaphor, broken up into bits like an ancient mosaic pavement containing many particles of gold, with an incomplete pattern, so I have stood by my original title and chosen for my emblem a butterfly on the gnomon of that dial, "which only counts the hours that are serene"; for although in recording the days of a long life, the shadow of sorrow and bereavement must necessarily fall on some of the pages, yet it has been my earnest desire to dwell on the brighter side of things—to interest and amuse, rather than to sadden or depress.

In this my chronicle I have striven as far as in me lies to avoid tedium, for is not tedium, either in writing or conversing, "the unpardonable sin"?—likewise the two faults which I have so often detected in the autobiography of others, viz., the pride that "apes humility," and all the while calls out to the reader (if I may be allowed the vulgarism) "Am I not a fine fellow?" and the more palpable self-conceit and egotism that asserts the fact boldly. Another lesson I have learned in the writings of some of my predecessors, is to refrain from saying bitter things of those who can no longer take me to task for so doing, and from wounding the feelings of survivors who loved them.

One of the chief pleas which was urged on me, and which encouraged me to write the following pages, was the fact that I had been on terms of close and tender friendship with many great men, any mention of whom would be welcome to my readers. But it is one thing to appreciate and remember the delightful companionship of such eminent friends as I may enumerate in these pages, and another to convey to others the faintest idea of their individuality.

During the course of writing I have hit upon what appeared to me a novel expedient. After carrying on my narrative to a certain point, I have inserted detached chapters, treating of people and places which are calculated in my opinion to interest the general reader, and that without much reference to dates; indeed, as far as those terrible stumbling-blocks are concerned, I plead guilty in many cases to inaccuracy, offering as my excuse that

I have never kept a continuous journal, but rather have written a few spasmodic pages at intervals. One more excuse, and I have done. In my blindness, I have been helped by more than one kind and patient secretary, but I have sadly missed the power of myself looking over the manuscript and detecting fault in style or frequent tautology. For all these shortcomings I humbly beg pardon, and earnestly desire to be forgiven.

"VANESSA."

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It is usual, at the commencement of a story, to give the description of the heroine, but a few words will suffice in the present instance. In complexion and colouring I am very fair, and have often flippantly remarked—

"Angels were painted fair to look like me."

Indeed, blondes have a great responsibility placed upon them, as in the old story-books the fair women are very good and the brunettes very bad, though I have not always found the distinction to be carried out in real life. The other chief characteristic of my exterior is that I am very diminutive, a subject on which I have been "chaffed" my life long. I have often been induced to complain that as "Greenwich is the standard for longitude, so Mary is the standard for shortitude." In spite of which, it has been a cherished vanity of mine that I have very long legs in proportion to my height, and five feet and eight heads (*Anglice*) in drawing, was the strange description I gave of myself to a friend, whose natural rejoinder was, "What a very remarkable animal!"

One of my chief moral attributes was light-heartedness, and, as Autolycus says:

"A merry heart goes many a league,
Your sad one tires in a mile"—

which is perhaps the reason of my having been an indefatigable walker. From my earliest childhood I have had a decided predilection—I might almost say passion—for all that is bright and brilliant, in garments, furniture, decorations. The "sick turned up with sad" which a few

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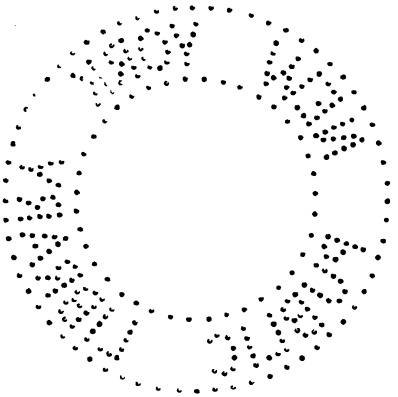

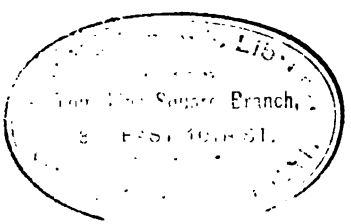
Branch,

years ago held such universal sway in fashion, and which I devoutly hope is now in the wane, never had any charms for me. Firmly believing as I do that the colouring of our native island is not sufficiently cheering of itself to dispense with cheerful adjuncts, I have wooed external brightness, which does not seem unnatural to the tastes of a "Butterfly." But let me proceed with my narrative.

Being a native of London, I am an undoubted Cockney, a circumstance which embittered many of my childish years, and although by no means of an envious disposition, I assuredly envied my sister the privilege of being born in a delightful old Queen Anne's mansion, in a pretty room, overhanging a broad gravel terrace, the windows of which were embowered with roses, jasmine, and honeysuckle—Balls Park, the home of my uncle, Lord John Townshend—and I have often upbraided my mother for not having selected so delightful a spot for my entrance into the world.[1]

At the time of my birth, we were in family three girls and two boys—Courtenay, Caroline (Caddy as she was always called), Charles, Charlotte, and myself. But one day, when I was between three and four, my mother asked me if I should not like a live doll to play with? Oh, rapture! Dolls were my passion, but a live doll!—the idea was ecstasy! How well I can recall my first sight of my youngest brother, seated on his nurse's knee, crowned with one of those quilted contrivances of white satin and rosy pink, that seemed a link between a baby hat of the period and a pudding or bourlet of the olden time. Oh!

[1] Mary Louisa Boyle, born November 1810, died April 1890.

how I then and there loved my live doll, my brother Cavendish—the little Benjamin of the family!—how I did love him with the love of more than half a century. How I love him still, though we no longer tread the earth together, and how fondly I cling to the hope of a reunion in that region—

> "Where those who left us dwell in joy sublime;
> And those we leave will come in God's good time."

But to return to the members of our family.[1] My parents were Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir Courtenay Boyle, second surviving son of Edmund, seventh Earl of Cork and Orrery, and Carolina Amelia, daughter of William Poyntz, of Midgham House, Berkshire.

As this is a book of confessions as well as of reminiscences, I may as well make a clean breast of it at once, and own that I take a pride in ancestry, and love Heraldry and History, and many of the "ries," even as scientific people love the "ologies." I am proud of my descent

[1] Vice-Admiral The Hon. Sir Courtenay Boyle, born 1770; married 1799 Carolina Amelia, daughter of William Poyntz, Esq., of Midgham, Co. Berks; died May 1844.

ISSUE OF ABOVE:

Courtenay Edmund William, Capt. R.N., born 1800; married 1836 Mary, daughter of W. Wallace Ogle, Esq.; died 1859.

Charles John, born 1806, died 1885; married 1849 Zacyntha Moore, daughter of General Sir Lorenzo Moore.

Cavendish Spencer, born 1814; married 1844 Rose Susan, daughter of Captain C. Alexander, Royal Engineers; died 1868.

Carolina, born 1803, died 1883.

Mary Louisa, born 1810, died 1890.

because my forefathers were many of them great and good men; and I once boasted that I could find five of them in Biographical Dictionaries, inclusive of Robert Boyle, "the Divine Philosopher of the World," who has been described in one of the aforesaid books as "the Father of Chemistry and the brother of the Earl of Cork."

I certainly admit, "that it is better to have a glory of your own, not borrowed of your fathers;" but surely it is better to have that than "none at all."

"I do not care about ancestry," said my dear friend, Manie Dickens, to me one day.

"Well," said I, "you are better off than any of us in that respect, for your great ancestor is still alive; but will not his children's children glory in his name?"

On my mother's side I claim collateral relationship with Rosamund Clifford. Now this involves a moral question. May I be pardoned for feeling any pride on that account? It is so romantic, so pathetic a tale, the scandal, if there were any, dates so many centuries back! The damsel was so fair. Besides, has not our beloved "Laureate" of late wiped the blot from fair Rosamund's escutcheon?

My father had served with great distinction in the Navy, into which he had entered at the very early age of ten, and had been midshipman on board Lord Nelson's ship, with whom he was a great favourite. I have in my possession two autograph letters of the Hero's, one written with the right, the other with the left hand, which I will insert here. The first is addressed to Lord Cork; the second to my father.

Lord Nelson to Lord Cork, written by the Right Hand.

PORTSMOUTH, *22nd July* 1787.

MY LORD,—I have received your letter of the 17th wherein you seem to think that my advice in regard to Courtenay may be of service to him. I wish it may, therefore will give it. In the first place, it is necessary he should be made complete in his navigation — and if this war continues, French is absolutely necessary. Drawing is an accomplishment that possibly a sea-officer may want. You will see almost the necessity of it when employed in foreign countries. Indeed the honour of the nation is so often entrusted to sea-officers, that there is no accomplishment that will not shine with peculiar lustre in them. He must nearly have served his time, therefore he cannot be so well employed as gaining knowledge. If I can at any time be of service to him, he may always call upon me. His charming disposition will ever make him Friends, and he may as well join the ship when his brother goes to the Continent.—I have the honour to be, my Lord,—Your most obedient humble servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

EARL CORK.

Nelson with the Left Hand.

"VICTORY," *18th August* 1803.

MY DEAR BOYLE,—I am very happy to have you in so fine a frigate under my command, for I am ever yours most faithfully, NELSON and BRONTE.

Honble. C. BOYLE,
H.M.S. *Seahorse*,
Malta.

During the war with France in the year 1800, my father

suffered shipwreck on the coast of Egypt, and narrowly escaped with his life. He sent all his crew ashore before he himself left the sinking vessel, headed by an officer with a flag of truce, to make terms with a detachment of French soldiers (the country being then in the occupation of Napoleon's army), and these soldiers stood on the beach, calmly watching the dangers and struggles of the shipwrecked mariners, as they endeavoured to gain the shore on hastily-constructed rafts, through surf which threatened to swamp them. The sea was running very high, and many of their provisions and possessions were floated off and lost to them for ever. The locality was near Rosetta, and the Frenchmen, in spite of promises of assistance and protection—which men of any chivalrous feeling would surely have afforded to an enemy in such straits—plundered the English sailors, ill-treated them, and threw them into prison, a fate which also befell their commanding officer on landing.

The history of that portion of my father's life is a long, and to me, interesting one. Suffice it to say, that from all the officials with whom he had to deal, both he and his men met with the harshest and most unjust treatment. Many of his crew succumbed under the hardships to which they were exposed in their dreary and noisome prison-houses. The bright exception to these hard-hearted functionaries was Marshal Kléber, one of Napoleon's most distinguished generals, a man of high courage, proverbial generosity, and great personal beauty. He was Governor of Cairo at the time, and showed my father especial favour, allowing him out of prison, "on parole," and courting his society on

every occasion. He also presented him with a sword, which I grieve to say did not become an heirloom in the family as my father made it an offering to the Prince Regent.

There were many among those who surrounded the Governor, to whom my father was an object of dislike and jealousy, and when General Kléber was assassinated by a fanatic, my father was accused of being an accomplice of the assassin, and condemned to death. His only companion and comforter in those terrible hours being his favourite pointer, "Malta," who kept him warm by lying on his chest at night, and scaring away the rats and scorpions which infested the cell. While awaiting the completion of his sentence, the prisoner wrote a most pathetic and eloquent farewell to his wife in England, then expecting her confinement. I subjoin the letter, in order that my readers may judge if the epithets I have bestowed on it be ill-chosen. I have read it over and over again, at many periods of my life, and every time

"It did beguile me of my tears."

FROM MY PRISON IN THE
CITADEL OF CAIRO, 19*th June* 1800.

Should this ever come to the hands of my beloved wife, I shall be no more. Torn from this world by a cruel enemy, I have been bound to answer for the safety of another captive, a French prisoner in the hands of the Turks, our allies. Should I, however, innocent of the crime imputed to me, suffer this unmerited death, I trust in God that I shall possess sufficient fortitude to die as a man, and sufficient religion to die as becomes a Christian.

My last prayer will be for the happiness and comfort of

VICE-ADMIRAL THE HON. SIR COURTENAY BOYLE.

THE HON. LADY BOYLE.

[*To face page* 8.

my beloved wife, and of her child, should it have pleased God that she has survived her lying-in. So high an opinion have I of her devout mind and excellent heart, that I shall only recommend her to instil into this dear infant its mother's principles and virtue.

Assure our friends, my loved Carolina, and particularly our dear mother, that my soul—which will pray to God to receive it during the last moments that it lingers here—will quit this world with emotions of gratitude for kindness to us both, and with a conviction of its continuance to you and to our child. . . . I cannot write more in the wretched prison where I am confined.

Summon, dear Carolina, your utmost fortitude, and endeavour by prayer to console yourself in this world of trial.

This is the tribute I ask to be paid to the memory of a husband, who wished only to live to promote your happiness. Let my just debts be paid; and give to John Stephens, an old and trusty servant of my father, fifty pounds. Prove this my last will—leaving and bequeathing everything I possess to my beloved wife, Carolina Amelia Boyle.

Wrote in prison, in the citadel of Cairo, after having had an audience with the French general-in-chief, Menou, who informed me that he had determined on my death, and that no application should make him move from his determination.

Adieu, for ever! My much loved and esteemed wife, adieu! COURTENAY BOYLE.

The cruel sentence would assuredly have been carried into execution, but for the timely arrival in those waters of the gallant Admiral, Sir Sydney Smith, whose influence effected an interchange of prisoners; and so Captain Courtenay Boyle, with his faithful dog, "Malta," returned in safety to his native land.

My mother was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen, in form, feature and complexion, and remained so till old age, and even after death. My eldest brother bore the name "Courtenay," and, following the profession of his father, he also went to sea when quite a boy. I can well remember our sorrow at his departure, and how, shortly after, there was some vague dread and anxiety respecting him, which I did not quite understand at the time, till on his sudden re-appearance the mystery was solved. He had gone on his first cruise in the (not good) ship *Meander*, which proved unseaworthy, and narrowly escaped foundering. My brother was asleep in his berth at the moment of extreme peril, and one of the officers forbade that he should be disturbed. "Leave the poor little chap in peace," he said, "and let him awake in Heaven." . . . But our middy came back in safety and lived to be an admiral. He brought home with him specimens of the *Meander's* timber, which would have made Mr Plimsoll's hair stand on end, for they crumbled away in our hands like so much touchwood.

Courtenay's first cruise I commemorated in rather a peculiar manner, by giving the name of "Meander" to my little bay mare, the first palfrey I ever mounted; and I am glad to say the name brought no ill-luck either to pony or rider. Courtenay was the very moral of a sailor—frank, light-hearted, open-handed, impulsive, of a most impressionable and susceptible heart, which he was in the constant habit of losing to every pretty girl he met. He was frequently engaged (perhaps I had better say entangled) before he had attained Post rank. His promotion came to him

early. One day he arrived at Hampton Court (before the days that railroads made the old Palace little more than a suburb of London), when his appearance in a yellow "po chay" called forth astonishment and upbraidings at his extravagance. "How else," was the proud reply, "should a Post-captain travel?" After passing through many vicissitudes in respect of affairs of the heart, Courtenay married one whose remarkable personal charms were her chief recommendation.

Next in succession came my sister Caroline (Caddy), who was often absent from home, going abroad with our Uncle and Aunt Poyntz, whose three daughters[1] were nearer her age and more fitted to be her companions than myself, her junior by several years. Wherever she went, Caddy was much admired. Her colouring was exceptionally bright, and even in her eightieth year, her eyes literally sparkled, and her complexion was of that red and white, so softly blent that it might have become an infant in the cradle. Yet the real, surpassing gift of beauty was reserved for my brother Charles. Ah! what a store of love and memory is connected with that dear name, and how well did the Greek epithet "Kalos" become him, which implies in its melodious sound both moral and physical beauty. The term beautiful does not appear, perhaps, often applicable to a man, but it certainly was to Charles. In feature, colouring and expression he was the counterpart of our mother, the same soft brown hair, the same sapphire blue eyes, the same faultless out-

[1] Frances, Lady Clinton; Elizabeth, Countess Spencer; Isabella, Marchioness of Exeter.

line of profile. I have a very fine painting of him by Samuel Reynolds, the son of the celebrated engraver. I have also a sketch of his head, a crayon drawing of great beauty, which is doubly valuable to me, as the work and precious gift of our dear friend and world-famed painter, George Watts.

"Blest be the hand, whose touch can give
The looks that last, the smiles that live!
Blest be the hand that gives us back
The looks we miss, the smiles we lack,
'Mid time and absence, distance, space,
Recalls the one familiar face
With us to dwell, with us abide,
Which our own tears alone can hide!"

An earlier friend, John Hayter, brother of Sir George Hayter, some time President of the Royal Academy, also made an equestrian sketch in coloured crayons of Charles in a gorgeous Albanian costume, which he brought with him from Greece, on his return from a cruise with our sailor brother. I shall never forget the sensation caused at the fancy ball at Brighton, when our young Albanian appeared with his sister Caroline, also arrayed in a genuine Greek costume. They were indeed a most beautiful pair, and looked the very embodiment of the hero and heroine of one of Byron's Eastern poems.

Fourth in succession came a little blue-eyed, fair-haired sister, Charlotte by name, who died when only six years old. In what high relief do such early records stand out on the tablet of a child's memory. Never shall I forget the tone of deep melancholy in which my mother would

exclaim: "No one knows what real sorrow is till they have lost a child."

Charlotte's burial-place is at Preston, in Kent, not far from Sheerness, where we were then living, and was chosen not alone on account of proximity. The church contains an elaborate monument erected by our ancestor, the first Earl of Cork, after he had made his fortune, to the memory of his parents, both natives of Kent. This monument has, I grieve to say, been suffered to fall into decay, although I have frequently raised my feeble voice in expostulation on the subject. My uncle, Lord John Townshend, wrote my little sister's epitaph, which is inscribed on a marble tablet in Preston church. To me the lines have ever appeared pathetic, although penned in the old-fashioned style of those days. After recording the dates of her birth and death, they go on to say:—

"Scarce yet had smiled thy early dawn of day,
Youth's roseate buds just opening into bloom,
When wintry winds, that chilled thy lovely May,
Shed all thy with'ring blossoms on the tomb.

"But blest, fair child, blest far above thy years,
With filial piety and duteous love,
Thy sure reward restrains our selfish tears
And lifts our hearts to Charlotte's bliss above."

Some years ago, when on a visit to my dear friend, Charles Dickens, I made a pilgrimage to the tombs of my ancestors, and that of my little sister. Knocking boldly at the door of the Rectory, I told my errand to the clergyman, asking him at the same time for the key of the church. He discreetly allowed me to remain alone

for some time, and when he followed me, naturally enquired to whom he was speaking. Now, I flatter myself, that my mode of self-introduction was rather original. Pointing to a portion of the monument in question, recording the early demise of a certain Mary Boyle, who had died at least two hundred years before, "That is my name," I said, "and I am very much obliged to you for your kindness."

I came between Charlotte and Cavendish, and of the latter I shall make constant mention, as being closely bound up with my life and heartstrings.

CHAPTER II

LIFE IN A DOCKYARD—FRIENDS, FAVOURITES AND RETAINERS

FEW people have had more homes than I, and few have resided in those homes for, comparatively speaking, so short a consecutive time. I have often said during a long life that I might lay claim in some measure to the character of a gipsy; but then, in the language of the profession to which I always boast that I belong by taste and inclination, I most assuredly never "looked the part." The first home I recollect is that of Sheerness Dockyard, when my father was Commissioner, and where, with occasional flittings, we remained until I had attained my eighth year. Remote as that period appears in retrospect, Sheerness and its environs are indelibly impressed on my memory—the frightful town, the hideous chapel, the bustling dockyard with its numerous shipping, the comfortable house, where I can still walk in recollection through every room, the pleasant garden, and the pretty conservatory with a large aviary at the end, which contained our favourite birds.

Alas! how well I remember one day as I went in to pay a visit to my feathered friends, I found that the

mousetrap which had been set for the robber of bird-seed, had caught and beheaded one of our prettiest bull-finches.

The life we led at Sheerness was very peculiar, and I question whether in those bygone days the Viceroy of India, or Ireland, or any other representative potentate, could have been held in higher consideration than the Commissioner of a Dockyard. I am speaking, of course, of our circumscribed official circle. As to the Commissioner's children, they were looked upon as little else than princes and princesses on a small scale, and to our numerous retainers the slightest wish of the youngest member of the family was as law. This remark held good more particularly with the boat's crew, who were the most devoted and loyal of our subjects. Two of these men were told off as running grooms to Cavendish and myself, and accompanied us in our daily rides to one of the few green spots in the neighbourhood, called the Major's March. Here, slipping the reins by which they had led us for safety through the town, they would gaze with admiration on our juvenile feats of horsemanship—our wild careering over what then appeared to us a vast tract of country. Cavendish's hack was a small Welsh pony, "Black Taffy," the present of a clerk in my father's office, who had imported the little charger from his native hills of Cambria. "Meander," my pony, was a bright golden bay, and many were the races and wild gallops that pretty little pair of ponies afforded us.

Besides our nautical stablemen, the coxswain, a small but most efficient seaman, was a great favourite with us all; and once, during the absence of the men-

servants, Lowe, as he was by name and stature, did not disdain to wait in the nursery. One day he caused us great merriment by stopping in the act of carrying in the children's dinner, and placing the wooden tray on the ground with a bang, exclaiming in a stentorian voice: "God bless my soul, I've forgot the beer!"—the leg of mutton being left to cool on the carpet, while Lowe descended to the cellar to fetch what he doubtless considered the most important item in the repast.

Another remarkable member of the crew was "Long George," a handsome giant, but decidedly a *mauvais sujet*, who was in constant scrapes and periodical danger of dismissal. When so placed, he would invariably steal up to the nursery, and with a timid knock, and in a coaxing tone, ask if "Miss Mary would be so very good as to beg Commissioner to let him off this once"; and downstairs would little Mary fly with a beating heart, to knock at the door of father's office. After being kept in suspense for a few moments, which seemed to her as many hours, she would scamper back to her "ne'er-do-weel" with the joyful intelligence that he was forgiven, but it was positively for the very last time. Some last times are of frequent recurrence.

Another class of men who came frequently under our notice were the convicts employed in various ways in the dockyard. Our nursery windows commanded a view of a spot where important works were carried on—wharfage, transport, and the like. It rejoiced in the name of Powder-Monkey Bay, a title that did not convey a very clear meaning to our young minds, savouring as it did of a

semi-zoological character. In those days criminals convicted of the worst offences wore round the waist an iron belt, from which were suspended heavy chains, fastened at each ankle, such as we see in Hogarth's painting of "Macheath," and other unworthies. From our windows, we often saw two boys thus accoutred at work, and never did so without a shudder; they were brothers, about fifteen or sixteen years of age, who had murdered their mother. A mother!—in our sight the most sacred, the most beloved of human beings. But there were different characters and various moral grades among these men, and perseverance in good conduct often shortened the period of their imprisonment. Those who had been artizans were allowed to carry on and dispose of their work while on board the hulks; and one of the convicts, who went by the name of "Tidy Dick," was permitted to make shoes for the Commissioner's children. We were very fond of him, and participated in his delight when he came to tell us he had obtained his release. We even added the mite of our small allowances to the subscription which our father and mother, the Admiral, and other dignitaries of the dockyard, had raised to fit out "Tidy Dick" with a new suit of clothes, in which he came to bid us good-bye. The word was not invented in those days, but there is no doubt about it, Dick was a regular "swell."

Another member of the community caused much amusement to my father, who on one occasion went into his garden and found a convict at work after the hour that the warder and the other prisoners had left off for the day.

"What are you here for?" was the question asked in

tones of surprise. The man jumped up hastily from his kneeling position, and pulling his forelock, answered in the most cheerful and unconcerned tones: "Oh! I am for bigamy, Commissioner."

Another convict was a skilful tailor, and was permitted the privilege of making costumes for our dramatic company on the occasion of our first play—a subject of great importance, of which I shall treat hereafter.

But while writing of our friends and retainers, I should be ungrateful to omit the mention of a warder endowed with the unusual name of Orper. This man had in our childish eyes attained the very summit of high art, and if in those early times we had ever heard of Michel Angelo, we should have placed Orper on a level with that great man. It must be confessed his genius was not as versatile, neither did he even attempt the modelling of the human form divine; but then his birds! It must also be allowed that his young patrons displayed much discrimination in classing and naming the peculiar ornithological representations which he carved in wood for our delight. These works of art were more especially objects of our admiration and desire, when slightly coloured or tinted. In this respect Orper had an illustrious follower in the celebrated John Gibson, although we are fain to believe that that eminent sculptor had never heard of his predecessor.

I have now come to a portion of my narrative which entails delicate handling, but I have promised that these pages shall contain confessions, and I will therefore lose no time in owning frankly that I was ever a flirt, and will candidly enter on the subject of my juvenile flirtations.

My first love was naturally much older than myself (being nearly fourteen), and very tall, a very handsome black-eyed fellow, the son of my father's dear friend and colleague, the Port Admiral. He was by fits and starts very good and condescending to me, and accepted my devotion in rather a patronizing manner. In fact, he was the one *qui tendait la joue.* I blush to acknowledge that on the Sunday of my first appearance in church (I was then not much more than five years old) I spent nearly the whole of the sermon weighing in my own mind the probability of walking home with George. My wildest hope was fulfilled, little as I deserved it. Hand in hand we returned from church, where I had been an inattentive worshipper. My love often passed our nursery windows, of which there were four—two looking round the respective corners—and I invariably ran from one to the other, about the hour I expected his appearance, to watch that beloved, and to me gigantic, form, and follow it with my eyes out of sight. But my attachment though ardent, was not of very long duration ; in my juvenile, if fickle, heart, George was ere long supplanted by no less a personage than the Commanding Officer of the Depôt. A man of his years, a soldier, a hero, who wore a Waterloo Medal and a brilliant uniform—a lover full of compliments—for

"A winning tongue had he,"

what chance had poor George the school-boy with such a rival? I used to walk with my sweetheart on the ramparts to hear the band play, and was often allowed to choose the air. To this very day I am not quite sure whether

gratified vanity or real affection preponderated in my childish breast. I am inclined, at this distance of time, to decide in favour of the first-named feeling, for I was most decidedly puffed up and elated by my military conquest. He often assured me he could never part from me, and would ask my father to give me to him, and that he would place me under a glass case on the chimney-piece of his barrack-room in whatever quarters he found himself, with divers similar compliments of the kind, which, I doubt not, he had addressed before and since to other ears. I listened with intense delight to his declarations, for I had a very low opinion of my own personal appearance, as the other members of my family surpassed me greatly in comeliness. He also presented me with frequent gifts, two of which I yet possess, and I still remember him after the lapse of more than half a century, with feelings of real regard. I never saw him again, but I read of his death, which occurred at a very advanced age, with some emotion, and rejoiced at the encomiums which were passed on him as a man and a soldier. I had also an adorer of quite another stamp, age, and profession. He was a contemporary of my father's, and a full admiral. I tolerated his attentions, and I am bound to say accepted many gifts, which was scarcely honourable in one whose heart was pledged to another. Sir Thomas Williams (for he was a baronet) gave me one day a pigeon of most beautiful plumage, who was so tame as to eat out of my hand, while I on my part, or rather my father for me, made him the more substantial offering of a cow. The pigeon was called "Tom," the cow received the name of "Mary," and the exchange was the cause of much

bantering on both sides. He was a very benevolent man, and was the original founder or instigator of that excellent establishment "The Naval Female School," to which, out of regard for my friend's memory, I became a subscriber when shillings were even scarcer than they are now, and I still continue to take a deep interest in the charity.

I am afraid some of these revelations are not calculated to raise me in the estimation of my readers, yet I must make another, for I have pledged myself to tell the truth, and the truth I will tell. I cannot remember how it came about. I suppose I must have overheard my mother or my governess (who, by the way, was a most beautiful young woman) reading Shakespeare, but I took a most extraordinary (at least so it appeared to my elders) taste—I may say passion—for the plays of our immortal poet. I found out where these volumes were placed on the book-shelf, and, one after another, would take them down and devour them with my eyes—the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its enchanting scenes of fairyland, being my especial favourite. So far, no harm was done; but alas! for the unfortunate day when I overheard (with the proverbially sharp ears of a little pitcher) my father enlarging to a friend of his on my wonderful taste in literature. The two men agreed that such a predilection and such a precocious power of appreciation showed undoubted promise of future talent. Alas! for the little eavesdropper, who had hitherto enjoyed her Shakespeare on her own account in a simple and single-minded manner. Now, for the first (do I boast, if I say for the last?) time in my life, I posed. When company came to dinner and I was allowed to

appear in the drawing-room for the brief and dreary period which intervenes between the arrival of the guests and the announcement that "they are served," I brought in my favourite volume, and was usually found by my father's friends in an attitude of deep absorption, poring over the pages, and fondly hoping that the company would think me very clever indeed, for I knew father did. I little guessed at the time that I should look back upon myself as I do now, and have for many, many years past, as a revolting little prig. The poses are over, the audiences are not needed, and I love my Shakespeare for himself, and myself, without any ulterior consideration. On the occasion of these, usually official, banquets, I made profound reflections on the law of precedence, as I saw it carried out in one Commissioner's house, and I came to the conclusion that I did not wish to be a lady of the first standing, as they never had a chance of going in to dinner with the Middies.

One more incident I must recall which was the cause of the greatest amusement and delight to us children, and was indeed planned entirely for our delectation. Two admirals, both well-known and honoured in later years, came to dinner rather early one evening. One was Sir James Gordon, afterwards Governor of Greenwich Hospital, a tall and handsome man, with only one leg, having replaced the other (which he lost, I believe, in action) by what was then called a "Greenwich pensioner"—an ordinary wooden substitute, such as was used by common seamen. The other was Sir Watkin Pell, and he also had but one leg, but, being more of

a dandy in such matters, he had provided himself with a shapely cork leg and foot, with its smart silk stocking and jaunty pump. Sir James Gordon, on whose knee I was sitting at the moment, asked if the children would not like to see a race between the two one-leggers. The dining-room was divided from the drawing-room by a long and somewhat spacious hall. This he proposed as their race-course, and, amid the clapping of big and small hands, the cheering on and the backing of Sir James Gordon (who was our idol) by the younger ones, the two admirals started, and the Scotchman won in a canter, to our infinite delight.

I now come to a most important episode in my existence, namely my first appearance on what I still fondly call the right side of the footlights, a circumstance most deeply interesting to myself, in which I shall endeavour to enlist the sympathy of my readers.

CHAPTER III

MY FIRST PLAY—MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF CLARENCE —DEPARTURE FOR SHEERNESS

A SUBJECT of such deep and vital interest, to a mind so dramatically constituted as mine, demands a separate chapter. My brother Charles came home for the holidays, from Charterhouse, just in time to celebrate the fourth anniversary of Cavendish's birthday, and this we proposed to do on a scale of unprecedented magnificence. For we entertained the astounding idea of writing and performing a Tragedy, in which the company, though consisting only of three persons, were to enact seven characters, the principal *rôle* being undertaken by the authoress, as well as the stage management, decorations, costumes, properties and business.

The plot was of a most thrilling and sensational character, for the better understanding of which I subjoin a Bill of the Play—not as it was, but as it ought to have been.

BY EXPRESS COMMAND AND UNDER THE ESPECIAL PATRONAGE

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE DOCKYARD

WILL BE

Performed for the first time on the 12th May 18——

THE ROMANTIC AND TRAGICAL DRAMA

OF

"THE KING AND THE USURPER"

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CAVENDISH,	*King of Little Britain, a Crusader, a Hero and a Lover.*	CAVENDISH BOYLE.
OSMAN, .	*An Ex-Slave, a Rebel, and a Usurper,*	CHARLES BOYLE.
THEODORE,	*The Brother-in-Arms and Confidant of the King,*	MARY BOYLE.
SELIM, . .	*Confidant of Osman,* . .	MARY BOYLE.
HIGH PRIEST,	. . . . .	CHARLES BOYLE.
IRENE, .	*A Converted Slave, betrothed to the King,*	MARY BOYLE.
ZAYDAH, .	*Her Countrywoman and Confidante*	CHARLES BOYLE.

LOCALITY.—*The Capital of Little Britain.*
PERIOD.—*Any time during the Crusades and in the very Dark Ages.*

The name of Little Britain was given out of compliment to the tender years of its monarch, and had no special geographical significance. The curtain drew up on a scene in the palace, where Zaydah announces to her mistress that Osman, the would-be usurper of the throne, desires an audience in the absence of the King, he being deeply smitten with the charms of his lovely fellow-countrywoman. The idea is revolting to the mind of the beautiful Irene. She will not listen for one moment to one word from the lips of this monster of ingratitude, who, not content with endeavouring to supplant his master on the throne, would now attempt to do so in the affections of his beloved. But the rebel is not to be so easily dismissed, and with what a burst of virtuous indignation is he received by the Prima Donna, in whose lofty breast love for one man and hatred for another are now waging war! The words forbidding Osman to lift her hand to his lips—lest

it should not be "worth her King's acceptance" when soiled by his barbarous touch—were given in manner worthy of Mrs Siddons, and fairly brought down the house; while the swift transitions of dress and character would have done honour to Mr Irving's *Lyons Mail*, had that eminent actor lived at the time. You had scarcely lost sight of the turban, trousers, and scimitar of the rebel, when your eyes were riveted by the charming *confidante*, Zaydah, like her lovely mistress, a convert to the Christian faith—for the play it may be seen had a decidedly religious as well as moral tendency.

A tender love-scene had no sooner passed between His Sacred Majesty and his betrothed wife, than he was to be seen in earnest conversation with his friend and brother-in-arms, the noble Theodore. In the character of this gallant soldier, Mary was universally allowed to show a masculine vigour and a warlike deportment scarcely to be expected from an actress, however talented. I can well remember how the pride of wearing a hat of unequivocally modern aspect, and flourishing a naked sword, much bigger than myself, made the moment of my appearance as Theodore one of the proudest of my life! In a drama of this nature, virtue was of course triumphant, vice and ingratitude defeated. A terrible scene ensued, in which Osman appeared on the stage flying before an unseen enemy, a victim to remorse, disappointed love and ambition, and commenced, before the audience, to commit that suicide which was supposed to be completed behind the scenes, whither he had repaired to change his dress. Here was our sister Caroline, who, not sharing to the

full our dramatic enthusiasm, had refused to appear on the stage, but nevertheless "had kindly consented" (after the fashion of Mr Sims Reeves) to take the part of the "Insurrection," in which character she was much admired in her spasmodic performance on the kettledrum.

The last scene was the Celebration of the Nuptials of King Cavendish and the lovely Irene, their hands being joined by a religious functionary of a most venerable aspect, a snow-white beard descending to his girdle, but of somewhat equivocal denomination. If any fault should be found with an inexperienced though talented author, in respect of calling the minister who performed the marriage ceremony a high priest, and dressing him in Judaical rather than Christian vestments, she would offer as an excuse the observation which a lady, famous for her lisp, once made when speaking of the late Lord Lytton: "We mutht make allowantheth for the ecthentrithiteh of geniuth."

So fell the curtain on three first appearances, amidst the deafening and enthusiastic applause of an audience composed of very different ingredients; for the Admiral was there and his family, the clergyman and doctor with their wives, the Officer in Command of the garrison, and many other members of the highest importance and standing in the dockyard, as well as minor officials, warders, boat's crew, and domestic servants, etc.

The whole community rang with the praises of the manner in which the great Dramatic Entertainment had been carried out. Indeed I never can forget the pride with which we listened to the verdict of the head-gardener,

who was a man of culture (in every sense I emphasize the word), when he assured us that the latter part of the play was the finest thing he had ever seen in all his life. The tailor (a convict) who made the gentlemen's costumes, also participated in the success, and I remember the delight with which my mother heard, on the day following the representation, how little Cavendish had thanked the *costumier* most graciously for making the royal robes so well. Let me pause to say they were indeed gorgeous, being constructed out of some old scarlet moreen curtains, bound with yellow cotton ferret, the kingly cap surmounted by a splendid brass ornament, which had fallen off one of the old chairs. "I wish I was really a king," said the little four-year-old monarch to the convict, "and then I would set you free at once."

Before taking leave of our life at Sheerness, I must mention that my father and mother were appointed to meet and welcome the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, when the Duchess first came to England as a bride. I am not sure where the meeting took place, but I have a vague idea that it must have been at Gravesend, and that my parents went there in the yacht, called the *Chatham*, which was always at the Commissioner's disposal, and in which we often went to London, a voyage of exquisite delight to us children. At all events, I know that Queen Adelaide always said that my mother was her first English friend, while the Duke of Clarence had already shown great favour to my father, and had stood godfather to my poor little lost sister. The last incident that I can remember at Sheerness is being taken to the

Ramparts, to see the flags of all the ships stationed in the harbour hoisted half-mast high, in consequence of the death of King George III. I have but a dim recollection of the circumstances of our departure, but I know it cost Cavendish and myself bitter tears to part from our humble friends, the boat's crew, the warders, and the convicts, all of whom participated in our regret.

Thus it will be seen I have lived in the reigns of four sovereigns, and without myself having been attached to a Court, I have seen much at different times of a Court life, as both my father and mother, my eldest brother and sister, were all members of royal households. Moreover, our lines fell in royal residences. My mother in her capacity of bed-chamber woman to Queen Charlotte, had a small set of apartments apportioned to her in the intervals of waiting (and even after the Queen's death) in St James' Palace; and she subsequently became the occupant of an excellent suite of rooms in the Palace of Hampton Court. Again, my father who—on leaving the dockyard of Sheerness had an appointment at the Navy Board—came into possession of a very good house attached to that office, in Somerset House, which, likewise, comes under the category of royal residences, or at least did so at one time. In the days of which I am now speaking, there were no buildings on the opposite side of Wellington Street, or, at all events, not sufficient to obstruct the pretty view of the river as far as Westminster Abbey from our windows. Here, as at Sheerness, we children enjoyed great privileges. The terrace overhanging the Thames was a pleasant and favourite resort and there

was always a boat at the disposal of the governess and the schoolroom, and two boatmen of our own, successors in our regard to the Sheerness crew. One of them in particular, an intelligent little hunchback, won our esteem, although he, shortly after our arrival, obtained the name of "Danny Man," from his unworthy prototype in the celebrated novel of the "Collegians," a book which made so much noise at the time of its publication.

It was our great delight to go by water on Sunday afternoon to Westminster Abbey, and there is no doubt we occasionally cut a grand figure on the river; for when my father went out he had a splendid barge, rowed by boatmen clad entirely in scarlet, with black jockey caps, such as in those picturesque old days formed part of that beautiful river procession in honour of the Lord Mayor, on the 9th of November, over the disappearance of which pageant I have often mourned. We occasionally had picnics, and went down to Greenwich or elsewhere in our splendid barge; and I well remember one day when I had the honour (for so it appeared to me) of dancing a reel with one of our scarlet boatmen and a blue jacket, a regular salt, who was one of the family.

Whilst we are on river topics, I cannot refrain from recalling an incident which amused every one very much including the royal personage who figures in it. One day at Hampton Court when the City barge came down, we went to see her as she arrived in front of the water-gallery at the end of the terrace in the royal gardens. Here the Duchess of Clarence was to embark for luncheon, and, when the feast was ready, naturally walked first towards

the companion, which was narrow and did not admit of two abreast. Suddenly, quick as a flash of lightning, came the Lady Mayoress, and, brushing past her royal guest, exclaimed: "Beg pardon, your Royal Highness, I take precedence here."

And no doubt she had the *pas*, for the Lady Mayoress is queen of the river to within a certain distance of Temple Bar; but the good lady little knew of how much merriment she was the occasion.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY DRAMATIC RECOLLECTIONS—RESIDENCE AT HAMPTON COURT

SOME of our more fashionable friends in London complained of Somerset House "being a long way off," that ambiguous term which, I suppose in those days, meant a long way from exclusive Mayfair. So indeed it was, but it was not far from the theatres, which, in my estimation, represented Elysium. We had two cousins, both influential in regard to position and fortune, but whose grandeur came home to me as being part proprietors of Drury Lane and the Lyceum. My father was a great lover of the drama, and would often apply for one or other of our kinsmen's boxes. I can still recall the thrill of joy with which I used to see, on our return from a walk or drive, the large silver ticket, looking more like some official badge, which the Duke of Devonshire had sent us, lying on the hall table, promising a night of rapture—for my father generally stipulated that little Mary should be of the party. I well believe that if I gave myself a little trouble I could bring back to my mind the names of almost every play, and every actor and actress I ever

saw in those schoolroom days. One piece in particular captivated my girlish fancy: it was called *The Cornish Miners*, and it is worth my while to remember it, for in that play I first saw those matchless *artistes*, the Keeleys (hear it, ye gods!) before their marriage. Yes, Mrs Keeley, I venture to hope you will honour this poor tribute with a perusal. It was there I saw Miss Goward, as the boy hero who volunteered to go down the shaft and rescue his comrades, from what peril, and in what manner, I cannot say. My father predicted the future success of the charming young actress, and I can recall even now the delightful comedian who ere long became her husband, with his laughter-provoking face, and lackadaisical air, carrying a lighted candle in the band of his miner's cap.

Of how many years of entertainment and genial amusement to me was that night the forerunner. I can also remember one of the first performances of the *Freischütz*, or, as it was then popularly called, the *Der Freischütz*, in London. Likewise some kind of musical burlesque, in which Madame Vestris sang all the favourite airs of that charming opera, showing how the nurse lulled her bantling to sleep, how the footman blacked the shoes, and how the housemaid trundled the mop, to the soft strains of the various choruses of Weber's beautiful masterpiece. In those far-off days there was no elaborately-painted drop to give a cheerful termination to the end of the entertainment, but a gloomy, dark-green baize curtain, with which my spirits fell at the same moment, betokening a termination to that night's joy; and who could tell when the delight-giving cousin would be again propitious. I amused my

friend Mr Irving,[1] by telling him one day that I had been brought up in the stage-box at his theatre, which was then the property of our cousin, Lord Exeter. Yes, it was there I first saw dear Charles Young in *The Stranger*, and cried so bitterly that my red and swollen eyes prevented my appearing at the ball to which I had been looking forward for weeks; it was then that I made acquaintance with Power, one of the best Irishmen that ever trod or tripped the stage. I say this, not excepting the inimitable Boucicault himself, or my true friend and fellow-actor, Charles Lever. But I must pull up, or my dramatic hobby will take the bit in his mouth, and convert every theatre into Astley's. Adorable Astley's!—what a treat you were to me, and how I loved Mazeppa and his horse, the friends of so many years, who continued to urge on his wild career far beyond the allotted span of an equine life; how often have I watched the dear old beast swimming across the mighty rushing river after the tempting bin of corn, visible to my eyes from a side-box.

I am perhaps a little more fastidious now, but the dramatic passion exists in all its fervour, and will till the curtain drops and the lights are extinguished.

But to turn once more to real life. The neighbourhood of Somerset House had other advantages beside those of the theatres, for the Royal Academy still existed under its roof, and almost every Monday morning during the Exhibition, we young ones used to go with our governess to pay the pictures a visit immediately on the opening of the

[1] Now Sir Henry Irving.

doors, when the rooms were empty, swept and garnished, before the crowd and its accompanying dust had arrived. Then there was a walk with father in the early morning to Covent Garden, when the alleys were all watered, the flowers all fresh and fragrant, and the market uncrowded.

Cavendish and I had several governesses before the Miss Richardson of whom I have spoken elsewhere, but the sad time arrived when my darling companion was to betake himself to the Charterhouse, which our brother Charles had lately left in the proud character of orator, a dignity which was afterwards reached in the next generation by another member[1] of our family. On the night ordained for Cavendish's departure, an upper boy came to our house, who was to be his master at school. At that moment I half disliked good John Horner, because he carried off my beloved brother; but the transient dislike soon changed into a tender friendship, which lasted many years. To break the fall, as it were, my father allowed me to accompany him and the two boys to the old Carthusian edifice, and I proceeded thither with the heaviest of hearts, my position rendered all the more cruel, because I had been forbidden to shed one tear, and was desired to sit far back in the carriage and not show myself. For the school-boy that was to be, assured me that the fellows always chaffed a new arrival about his sister. This was a terrible wound, but in the course of time I became a frequent visitor at Charterhouse, was allowed to go on the green (cruel misnomer for the black

[1] The Editor of these Memoirs, Sir Courtenay Edmund Boyle, K.C.B.

patch where they played cricket), and, if the truth be told, made close friendships with some of the "fellows." Alfred Montgomery, Frank Sheridan, and John Horner often came to our house with Cavendish from Saturday till Sunday night, to my inexpressible delight! There are none left now to talk over old Charterhouse days with me!

As I have said in my preface, I have not a good head for dates, and I may as well make a clean breast of it at once, and add, for figures of any kind. It may be from want of practice, as far as pounds, shillings, and pence are concerned, for I have never had much experience in counting up thousands on my own account. In respect of dates, then (which, I hope the reader will agree with me, are not of much importance in a narrative of this kind), I do not pretend to the strict order of succession, but I know it was in the year 1821 that George IV. was crowned, and I can well remember the excitement I experienced in seeing my father, mother and sister set off for the coronation. I looked from the window with longing eyes, deeply regretting I was not allowed to be of the party. My father was the most punctual of men—indeed he would have come under the category of those who overdid the virtue. The Duke of Wellington, it will be remembered, upon the Queen saying to him: "You see how punctual I am, Duke, I am even before my time," replied with blunt veracity, "That, Your Majesty, is not punctuality." My sister did not inherit this trait in her father's character. She was late, and in answer to his vociferous summons from the carriage, ran downstairs, in her hurry, without

her white satin shoes, which were thrown after her from the window. My father's extreme anxiety to be early on the scene may, however, be accounted for by the fact that he was to form part of the procession, as train-bearer, or page of the coronation robes of his brother, Lord Cork. His dress was not picturesque, being a scarlet and gold frock-coat, or tunic, bound round the waist with a blue silk sash, and I am free to confess that I did not consider his age, stature, or costume in any way calculated to fulfil my ideal of a page; but then the page of my imagination was naturally of a dramatic sort. I do not know that I have yet recovered from the sorrow caused by my missing that magnificent sight. It is true that I have assisted since, at two other coronations, but in both of these there was no banquet, and worse than all, no Champion! The rest of the pageant was doubtless splendid in every sense of the word, but the idea of the Champion was so historical, so romantic, and was I not the most romantic of small human beings? Besides the description of the challenger, who flung down his gauntlet in Westminster Hall, and dared any one to hazard a doubt on the claim of the Sovereign to the throne, was there not a description, I say, of this remnant of chivalry in the pages of Walter Scott's "Red Gauntlet?" Walter Scott! the god of my literary idolatry, with whose heroes I had fallen in love, in succession—whose heroines I had envied and admired one after another, encouraged thereto by our governess, who judged rightly that children could scarcely be too young to appreciate the beauties of that incomparable novelist. I must confess that

several alleviations were offered to my regret at not witnessing that coronation. I had a beautiful toy given me of a kind which is now, I believe, obsolete—a small wooden case containing a roll of a coloured representation of the procession, several yards long, and commencing with the figures of Miss "Herb Strewer Fellowes"—for so the lady was designated on her visiting-card—and her maidens, and ending, as Royal processions do, with the most exalted Personage. This was my delight, and I was never tired of drawing it out and gazing at it; but better than all, I went to the theatre with my father, and saw as near a resemblance as could be produced on the stage, to the glories of that day. I can perfectly recall the bow with which Elliston the actor gave the very facsimile of that of His Majesty George IV., which was universally upheld for its surpassing grace. Then, oh joy! There was the Champion in complete armour, on a horse richly caparisoned, whose hoofs sounded on the wooden floor of the stage with a hollow, almost terrible, reverberation, as he backed—backed, and piaffed and caracoled and curvetted, according to all the strict regulations of the *haute école.*

Dear reader, it was no idle boast about royal residences, for when it came to pass that my father left his post at Somerset House, and, preferring to live in London, took up his abode in Upper Berkeley Street, where we often visited him, my mother and the rest of the family settled at Hampton Court. This proved to be the home of the longest standing I can remember, as with occasional, I may say frequent, flittings, we remained there till 1840.

The grant of apartments in those days was in the gift of the Lord Chamberlain, and Lord John Thynne (afterwards Lord Carteret) had bestowed a set of rooms, some years before, on his friend and connection, Mrs Courtenay Boyle. Things altogether were at that time on a very different footing to what they are now, for the palace had gained the name of the Quality Alms House, and, as regarded the quality part of the title, it was well named, seeing that the inhabitants counted Seymours, Montagus, Pagets, Walpoles, Ponsonbys, and other names connected with the Upper House, many of them far from being bedesmen and bedeswomen, and for the most part better off than the present inmates of the palace. Then, too, such a minor detail as a husband did not disqualify a lady from being an occupant. Things are entirely on a different footing now. Now the grant of rooms is solely in the hands of the sovereign, and our beloved Queen,[1] who cares for the fatherless, and befriends the cause of the widow, takes more into consideration the needs of the candidates, and the services and merits of the husband or relative they survive, than any recommendation of family or of rank.

[1] Her late Majesty Queen Victoria.

CHAPTER V

LIFE AT HAMPTON COURT

OUR apartments were situated in the older, or Wolseyan, portion of the building, not in the square edifice which Sir Christopher Wren built for Dutch William. The architect's monogram may still be found over a small door in Fountain Court, to mark where he lodged. Our windows looked out on the Chapel Court on one side, and Tennis Court Lane on the other; and under those windows I often listened of a summer's night, with mingled pride and rapture, to a quartette of serenaders, who sang there in Mary's honour. Those beautiful boyish voices which still echo in my ears, and make sweet, sad music in my memory! Frank and Charlie Sheridan, Cavendish Boyle and Alfred Montgomery.[1] Alas! only one of that little band now remains to whom I can say, "Do you remember?" And alas! once more, those dear old rooms, the scene of so many happy days; they were totally destroyed by fire, through the wanton carelessness of a housemaid, in 1886. The Sheridans were our dearest friends, and as some of their windows faced some of ours, we invented a code of signals

[1] Alas! to say, Alfred Montgomery—most genial of critics as of playmates—died in 1896.

for our own convenience. How many assignations were made, how many fishing parties, how many boating expeditions, how many rehearsals! Yes, I "have had playmates, I have had companions; all—all are gone, the old familiar faces," the forms have vanished and their voices hushed before their time. One of that dear company passed away but a few short years ago; she wrote to me just before her death, to say, "She felt as if the daisy quiet were slowly stealing over her." I am speaking now of Georgina, Duchess of Somerset, in whose limpid blue eyes and matchless smile I could trace, lingering to the last, the charms of the "Queen of Love and Beauty,"[1] and wonder that her undoubted claim to that proud title were ever questioned. Alas! of all the members of that generation of two loving families, I alone remain!

It was in the cloisters, coming out of chapel, that I first saw, in a little brown frock, the future Governor-General of Canada and Viceroy of India, now (1888) the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, and since that time every day of our re-meeting has been marked with a red letter in my calendar.

What a difference between the Hampton Court of those and these days. In the gardens, when I first remember them, the beds were decked with the sickly Michaelmas Daisy, and the flaunting Golden Rod, which made unsightly and straggling borders—a pitiable contrast

[1] Jane Georgina, daughter of Thomas Sheridan, married, in 1830, Edward, twelfth Duke of Somerset, and died in 1884. As Lady St Maur she was the "Queen of Beauty" at the Eglinton tournament in 1839

to the perfumed and variegated flora of the present day. Yet I confess to a lingering regret for the rich clusters of the Lilac, mingling with the golden drop of the Laburnum, which then showed from out the gloomy, fantastic yews, and made a charming group in early Spring. Queen Mary's, or the Private Garden, as it used to be called, now scarcely deserves that name, when crowds of holiday folk flock to see the celebrated vine.

Not very long ago, I was enquiring of a porter at the railway station if those gentry were not difficult to cope with. "Well, ma'am," said he, in a meek voice, "last Easter Monday there were twenty thousand of them, and to be sure I was knocked down four times" (he was a man of inches too); "but I don't suppose they did it a' purpose."

In old days the visitors used to arrive in vans; but what we were wont to call the incursions of the Vandals bore small proportion to the numbers that now come down, like "wolves on the sheep-fold." The gardens were indeed most lovely, particularly during the season when the Lime-trees were in blossom, and their perfume perceptible as far off as the old Clock Court. Dearly did I love to sit by my mother's side and watch the moon rising slowly over the lofty elms in the Home Park, which skirts the gardens. How often have I sat there since, with another dear relative and inhabitant of the palace! How sweet it was to rest on the old wooden bench in the spot irreverently called "Purr Corner." How soft was the chime of the church bells, as it came across the river from Thames Ditton, recalling Byron's melodious lines of "Music o'er the waters,"

Hampton Court, in my childish days, had its peculiar characters. There was an old Dutchman, who had come over with the Stadtholder,[1] and had long survived his royal master. He was a source of great amusement to us children, from his quaint, old-fashioned appearance, but our chief delight was to hear him speak of his wife, whom he invariably designated as his "loaf." There were two old women, of a most shrivelled appearance, christened by my sister "Annie Winnie" and "Ailsie Gourley" (after Walter Scott), who used to sit on hassocks, with a basket between them, the while they, in lack of male gardeners, weeded the broad terrace walk. I blush to confess that my youngest brother and I found it a cherished pastime to dash headlong between these two guardians of the terrace, as in an impetuous race, upsetting the basket and scattering the contents far and wide. This proceeding entailed a severe reprimand from the poor old ladies, whose work had all to begin again, and terrible were the threats made use of on the occasion, that they would write immediately and complain of us to His Majesty.

Another juvenile enormity in which we indulged was to warn the tourists, whom we saw approaching the precincts of the labyrinth or maze, *not* to follow the directions of the gardener, whose aim it was to mislead them, but to listen to our advice, and take the course we prescribed for them. Our delight was unmingled when we heard the gardener, raised aloft on a high seat, feebly attempting to arrest their steps, while our misguided victims steadily pursued the road which led to obstruction.

[1] This is evidently an error on the part of the Authoress.

At that period, the office of Housekeeper was a very important one in the palace—in fact, two privileged persons enjoyed this title. One was a lady, almost invariably a member of the aristocracy, who occupied the apartments, or rather house, now inhabited by H.R.H. Princess Frederica of Hanover.[1] This lady had the appointment of the Under-Housekeeper, a certain Mrs Beer, whose husband, indeed, was a very great official, and, if I might be excused a vulgarism, thought anything but *small* beer of himself; he was a dignitary, in every sense of the word, and one of the last of the pig-tails. Between this illustrious character and myself there existed some rivalry and a slight feeling of irritation. I think I may assert without vain-glory, that I knew more about the pictures, their subjects, and their painters, than the presiding spirit; but I am prone to confess that I was one of that troublesome class, a child of an enquiring mind, and I was very fond of "knowing all about it." Unlike most children, and even many uneducated people, I was a great admirer and lover of the cartoons of Raphael. Of these, Mr Beer never varied in his daily description. He would stand opposite the "Death of Ananias and Sapphira," and, pointing to the picture, exclaim in a strident voice: "Observe—horror! remorse! fear! drapery!" as an incentive to admiration of what he considered the salient points. When he described the "Charge to Peter," in tones which he did not intend to be irreverent, but which were undoubtedly threatening, he would cry: "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs," the terror-inspiring

[1] Now Viscountess Wolseley's apartments.

voice according but ill with the sublime calm of the speaker.

Perhaps my favourite of the collection was that of "Paul and Barnabas," when the people propose to offer them sacrifice as Jupiter and Mercury. There were some figures in this group that puzzled my young wits; and one day, going round at the same time as a very large party, I addressed Mr Beer before them all.

"Will you please tell me," I said, in what I hoped was a very conciliatory voice, "who are those men behind the Apostles, in blue and red mantles?"

Never shall I forget the tones of thunder with which Mr Beer turned upon me. That anything so small and insignificant should arrest him in his career of graphic description, and ask him a question which, if the truth be spoken, he was as unable to answer as I was, was unpardonable. With a glance which I ought never to have survived, he exclaimed: "*Sirs, we be not gods but men.*" The reply was far from satisfactory, but it was Gospel truth, and as such I was obliged to receive it.

Another incident connected with my early days at Hampton Court appears to me to deserve a place here. It is a little romance, of which the hero is a butcher boy. In those bygone times, the butcher formed a prominent feature in the annals of the palace. There was very little competition in trade, and the butcher in particular was usually bound to make a rapid fortune.

One day I went with my mother (who by the way was an excellent housewife) to speak to the butcher, who had just arrived and set up shop. After a few preliminary

arrangements as to future custom, my mother looked at the man for some time in a scrutinising manner, and then said to him: "It is very extraordinary, but I have an impression that I have seen your face before, and yet I cannot recall to mind where and when." "I think you must be mistaken, madam," he replied, "for I seldom forget a face; and yet, now you mention it, I have a sort of misty recollection that your features are familiar to me"; and so the lady and the butcher looked at each other for some time, but without clearing up the mystery.

A day or two afterwards, my mother paid Mr Ives a second visit, and this time she was accompanied by my sister. "I am come," she said, "to ask you one or two questions. Did you ever, many years ago—say ten or twelve—stop the carriage of a lady, in Oxford Street, when her horses ran away and the coachman was thrown off the box?" "Certainly," answered the butcher; "I remember it all as if it were yesterday. I was but a lad then, and was sauntering along, with my tray on my shoulder, when I heard a great hallooing and screaming, and people rushing about. I turned round and saw a yellow chariot, drawn by a splendid pair of young black roans, dashing down the street at a furious pace, and at the window a beautiful lady with a little girl, calling distractedly for help. Nobody seemed inclined to make any effort to assist them. I was so sorry for the poor things, and I thought I would try my best, so I ran forward, and thrusting my tray before the horses' eyes, made them stop quite suddenly." "Quite right, quite right," said my

mother, "and here are the two ladies whose lives you saved. I was a witness of your brave action, and the moment I recovered myself I looked round for my preserver, but you were gone. I enquired of some of the bystanders what had become of you, but they could not tell me; you had disappeared, and in spite of all my endeavours to discover you, we never met again till the day before yesterday."

The man smiled. "Well, ma'am," he said, "there was no more for me to do; there were plenty of people too ready to help you, and I should only have been in the way." He then finished his speech with no mean compliment to the beautiful girl who stood before him (the little child of that eventful day). "And what a pity it would have been, to be sure, if she had not lived!"—which conversation and conduct go to prove, in my opinion, that the butcher was not only a hero, but a gentleman.

My mother told the story right and left, and secured her friend, not only the custom, but visits from many of the inmates of the palace, and she related the incident so graphically to the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, that the custom of Bushey House, where H.R.H. resided as Ranger of the Park, was assured to him. So that in fact this early act of heroism helped to make the fortune of John Ives and of his son after him.

I naturally make frequent allusions to friends of all kinds and classes, and am therefore tempted to insert an anecdote about a feathered acquaintance of mine, which will not try the reader's patience long.

One day during our residence in the palace, I was

walking with my mother over Molesey Bridge, when we were attracted to a small, poor-looking cottage, in aspect like an Irish cabin, by the exquisite singing of a thrush. The spot is now covered by houses and shops, but at that time the cottage of which I speak was isolated. It contained but one room, and was inhabited by an aged pair, I might well say, of lovers, for, with the exception of their garb, they were the most complete representatives of "John Anderson" and his wife. They were very poor, and their richest possession was the thrush which hung outside the door in a wicker cage, and sent forth a perfect burst of melody. In the wilderness connected with the palace gardens there were choirs of thrushes, blackbirds, and others, but not one of those free warblers could be compared in fulness of song to that captive bird.

We remained listening for some moments, and then my mother entered the cottage, made acquaintance with the old couple, and asked if they would be willing to part with the thrush to her. At first rather a blank look came over the old man's countenance, but he was poor and ailing, and was persuaded by the arguments of the "Missus," who was doubtless thinking the price of their favourite would enable her to get some little dainty for her good man. So the bargain began, a sum was named, the double of which was paid by my mother, who sent a servant the next morning to claim her purchase. Then resulted a disappointment. The cage was placed in a large and cheerful window in our drawing-room, but not a sound, not a note, came from the melancholy bird, who drooped and hung its head as if moulting; we fed, we

coaxed, we whistled, but it remained silent, motionless, and moping. My mother felt as much indignation as was consistent with her gentle nature. She had not pressed the old people to sell the bird, she had only asked the question, "Were they willing to do so?" She had given them double the sum they asked, and now—it was not in her nature to be suspicious—but it looked as if another bird had been palmed off upon her, in place of the magnificent songster. She gave the thrush several days' trial, but at length her patience was exhausted, and she sent for its late owner to expostulate.

The door opened and in he came, hat in hand, and my mother advanced to meet him, armed with some mild rebuke. But neither of them was allowed to speak, for no sooner did the old man make his appearance in the room than the bird leaped down from its perch, spread its wings, and broke out into so triumphant a song of joy, that it seemed as if the whole room vibrated with that burst of melody.

"What, pretty Speckledy," said the man, approaching the cage, "you know me then, do you?" and the thrush kept flapping his wings, and moving from side to side, one might almost say, dancing with joy.

There was no doubt about it; it was the same bird that had charmed our ears in the lane at Molesey, but, like the Hebrew captives, it could not sing its songs in a strange land.

"Take it back," my mother said, "I would not part such friends for all the world," and off together went that loving pair, "Pretty Speckledy" still in full song, which he continued all the way down our turret stairs.

CHAPTER VI

OUR EXTRA HOMES

I MUST now make a break in the regular line of narrative, to interpolate a chapter, without specifying any particular dates, as the visits of which this portion of my story treats were spread over a large space of time, and intersected many of the different passages of the life I have hitherto recorded.

To begin with Marston, the property of my uncle Lord Cork, and the early home of my dear father. Marston Bigot was a pretty place and had been purchased by our direct ancestor, Richard Boyle (surnamed the "great Earl of Cork") from Sir John Ippisley, the representative of an old Somersetshire family in the neighbourhood. This ancestor of ours had a very large family, of whom four were sons, and every one created a peer, with the exception of the youngest, Robert, who declined the honour, and whose name is immortalised as the "Divine Philosopher of the World." To Roger Boyle, his second son, Lord Cork gave an estate in Somersetshire; this gallant soldier and loyalist was first created Baron Broghill and afterwards Earl of Orrery. He was much attached to the royal cause, but during the Protectorate, Oliver Cromwell, who had a great

admiration for his military genius, sent for him one day and placed two alternatives before him, namely, the command of an expedition against the Irish rebels, or a lodging in the Tower of London. "The choice is open to you," he said; "in serving in this campaign you will be acting the part of a patriot, but if you prefer the walls of a prison, I have no more to say."

A long discussion ensued. Lord Broghill demurred, Cromwell insisted, and at length the former acquiesced in the Protector's offer, with the proviso that he would never be called upon to lift his sword against his sovereign master. It is a matter of history what a distinguished part Lord Broghill played in this Irish campaign.

In the pleasure ground not far from Marston there stood a quaint little cottage, one room of which had been fitted up by my uncle for his favourite daughter, Louisa, a beautiful, blooming girl, and my chosen friend, who was cut off by smallpox a few years later, at the early age of nineteen. The little cot served as a summer, or pleasure, house; we children were allowed to have tea in it, and to dig and delve in the small garden before it to our heart's content. There was an historical interest connected with this small dwelling which enhanced its merit in my eyes.

On quitting the service of the Parliament, Lord Orrery, as he then was, retired to his seat at Marston Bigot, and went on Sunday, as was his custom, to the small church adjoining the house. There he sat for some time awaiting the arrival of the usual clergyman, and his patience being exhausted, he rose to return home. His steward, who was in the congregation, told him there was a minister present

HONBLE. EDMUND BOYLE, AFTERWARDS EIGHTH EARL OF CORK, BORN 1787.

HONBLE. RICHARD BOYLE, ELDER BROTHER OF ABOVE, DIED YOUNG.

HONBLE. COURTENAY BOYLE, BORN 1770, AFTERWARDS VICE-ADMIRAL, K.C.B.

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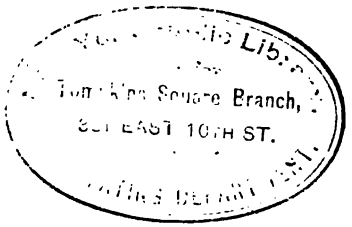
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who offered his services both as reader and preacher. Lord Orrery expressed his gratitude, "and was never more edified than he was on that day by the sense, learning and piety of the discourse." He waylaid the clergyman, complimented him on his sermon, and invited him to dinner at the house. When seated at table, his lordship enquired of his new friend every particular of his life and fortune.

"My lord," was the reply, "my name is Asberry. I am a clergyman of the Church of England, and a devoted subject to the king. I and my son have lived for a long time within a few paces of your lordship's house, in fact, under the garden wall, in a poor cottage. I have a little money, and some few books, and my boy and I dig and read by turns, submitting ourselves cheerfully to the will of Providence."

Lord Orrery was much pleased with the conversation and manner of this learned and worthy man, and obtained for him a small annual income without the obligation of taking the Covenant, and was in other ways beneficial to him. Mr Asberry lived for some years longer at Marston, and died, worthily lamented. It is easy to believe that this historical incident made Asberry Cottage doubly interesting to our young imaginations. Marston, which has been much enlarged and improved by the present owner, did not lay claim to the title of a fine house and property, more especially when placed in contrast with the "most august house in England"—for Longleat[1] could be seen from the windows, and is within a walk. The park also is but small, though, in my eyes, remarkable for contain-

[1] Residence of the Marquis of Bath.

ing a Glastonbury Thorn. The legend is well known—that Joseph of Arimathæa (how he came to England it would be difficult to imagine) planted the staff which he held in his hand in the soil (ever afterwards considered sacred) of Glastonbury, and the staff blossomed. Certain it is that when every other tree in the surrounding woods is bare at Christmas, the hawthorn at the entrance of Marston park is oftentime in flower! I have seen it with my own eyes, and always looked upon it as a real miracle. The house is charmingly situated on a slope, and commands a beautiful view, with hills in the distance, and the tower of Stourhead, where King Alfred unfurled his standard against the Danes. Stourhead was once the property of the ancient family of the Stourtons, who bear as their coat-of-arms six fountains, in remembrance of the six springs which rise thereabouts in the valley of the Stour—a fact in heraldry that I doubt not is well known to the head of that noble house.

The house at Marston is a perfect sun-trap, and although the building could lay no claim to architectural beauty, yet as the birthplace of my father and of many of my ancestors, whose portraits adorn the walls, I dearly loved the place, where so many of our Christmasses were spent with innumerable cousins of different ages. Cousins we were indeed, for the master and mistress of that house were cousins themselves, and my father's brother had married my mother's sister.

The country round Marston affords a charming type of home English scenery, being almost entirely pasture land, embellished with very pretty woodlands and several

LONGLEAT.

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country seats of great beauty, especially Longleat and Mells Park. Walks, rides, and drives are all varied in their character, and the road to Bath (in those days there was no short-cut by rail) was essentially picturesque, and as full of ups and downs as life itself!

Another house [1] was in Hertfordshire, close, indeed, to the town of Hertford itself. It is a quaint, old, red brick building with charming rooms, and a gallery that in my early childhood I considered interminable as to length; it was the property of my uncle by marriage, Lord John Townshend. He was indeed a link with the past, having been the friend of Fox and Sheridan, and having sat to Sir Joshua Reynolds. His wife [2] was my mother's sister (her elder by nearly twenty years), who retained till an advanced age the traces of that beauty which was immortalised by Hoppner in one of his most delightful portraits, still hanging on the walls in the dear old dwelling. When very young, she had united herself to a man whose cruelty and immorality made her life miserable. The marriage was dissolved, and Lord John Townshend, as her second husband, did all in his power to make her forget the sorrows which had clouded her early years. But long before I knew of this sad passage in her history, I had observed the shade of melancholy and mystery which hung over my dear aunt's aspect and manner.

Balls Park was a typical English house, birds, bees, butterflies, honeysuckle, roses. Our visits there were al-

[1] Balls Park.

[2] Georgiana Anne, daughter of William Poyntz, Esq.

most always in the "sweete season that budde and blossom brings," and my remembrance of the place is invariably connected with summer. Here were cousins too, and many of them to whom I was very much attached, though they were greatly my seniors; no one ever was so rich in cousins. I remember once meeting the late Lord Carlisle at dinner at Charles Dickens'. "Mary Boyle is a cousin of mine," said Lord Carlisle. "I suppose so," replied Dickens; "I have never yet met any one who was *not* her cousin."

Another house was Wigan Rectory, in Lancashire, a very different locality indeed. A frightful, black, manufacturing town, but we loved to go there, for my uncle George Bridgeman and his wife were most indulgent to us children.[1] Mr Bridgeman had first married my father's, and after her death my mother's, sister, and both husband and wife were our kind playfellows, taking an interest in all our little pastimes, and rich in that quality, so dear to childish hearts, of genuine fun. My aunt Louisa was devoted to gardening, and although her pleasure grounds were circumscribed, she took the greatest delight therein. I fear I wounded her horticultural nature on one occasion, when I complained that the rose I had just picked smelt of soot, and blacked my nose when raised thereto! In the backyard of the Rectory a magnificent wolf-dog lived in the kennel, the object of

[1] Rev George Bridgeman married, in 1792, Lady Lucy Boyle, only daughter of Edmund, seventh Earl of Cork. She died in 1801, and he married in 1809, Charlotte Louisa, daughter of William Poyntz of Midgham.

universal terror among the servants and gardeners. But I believed in and trusted dogs, and my firm conviction was that Lupus was misunderstood. I bribed the servants to let me feed him, which I did first at a respectful distance, advancing nearer and nearer each day as I presented him with his dinner. At length I deemed him tamed, and, not without slight trepidation, I approached, let slip his collar, and opened the garden gate. Never shall I forget the consternation which the apparition of girl and dog caused in my aunt's little sitting-room which opened on the lawn. She was talking to my mother in this sanctum when she saw Lupus bounding over the grass, and standing on the threshold of her boudoir. With a loud cry the Rector's wife jumped upon the chair, gathering her skirts around her, and summoning her juvenile protectress to call off the dog! But Lupus did no harm; he was only elated by his new-born freedom, and he became from that day the constant companion of the daily walks I took with my youngest brother and our nurse.

But the most beautiful and the favourite of our many homes was Cowdray Park, close to Midhurst in Sussex, which had come into possession of my mother's only surviving brother, William Poyntz, by his marriage with Elizabeth Browne, sister and sole heiress of Viscount Montague of that name. Respecting this family and property, there is a most tragical history. To the best of my belief, it was the father of Mrs Poyntz, *née* Browne, who seceded from the Roman Catholic Church, and was in consequence excommunicated. The ban in-

cluded fire and water, and the fulfilment was most terrible. My aunt's brother—of whom I have spoken as the last Lord Montague—was travelling on the Continent with his friend Major Burdett, when the two travellers meditated the mad scheme of shooting the falls of Schaffhausen. In vain did Lord Montague's old servant expostulate and implore; in vain did the innkeeper assure the English gentlemen that the enterprise would be one of simple insanity; in vain was every obstacle thrown in their way by boatmen in the neighbourhood, none of whom cared to venture his life in so wild an undertaking. Obstinate and persevering, they secured the services of two boatmen, and achieved the result anticipated by all. The boat capsized, and all the men were drowned. The catastrophe happened in 1800, and I believe it to have been the next day, or at least within the space of a very few days afterwards, that an express arrived from England, stating that Lord Montague's magnificent house of Cowdray was almost entirely destroyed by fire. This fine structure was a splendid example of Elizabethan architecture. Even now, partially covered as it is by ivy, the ruins present a most picturesque aspect, and attract numbers of visitors in the summer season from all quarters of the county.

My uncle and aunt lived about a mile from the ruins, in a house which had originally been the gamekeeper's lodge, with low, small rooms in the cottage style, but constant additions and improvements had converted it into a pretty dwelling-house. A beautiful wood, with winding paths and natural terraces, skirted the lodge on one side. In my eye that wood was a primeval forest, and in the

summer and autumn, when the leaves were still on the trees, I used to snatch a fearful joy by losing myself in its depths. In those, as it appeared to me, vast recesses, was pointed out the "Priest's Walk," named after that stern ecclesiastic who, according to tradition, had been instrumental in bringing about the curse pronounced upon the family. There is, indeed, an earlier tradition of a curse overhanging the fortunes of the possessors of Cowdray, on which I never laid much stress, as the malediction never appeared to have been carried out until after the secession from the Roman Catholic faith of the last Lord Montague but one. On the other side of the house the park stretched away for many miles with broken ground, swelling uplands and large clumps of timber trees of all kinds, one of the most beautiful parks in England. Close to the ruined house are some Spanish chestnuts, among the loftiest I have ever seen, and I believe they were the first that were planted in this country.

Mr and Mrs Poyntz had originally a family of five children, but in the year 1815 the catastrophe occurred which carried out to the full the anathema already alluded to.

The family were spending some time at Bognor, during the bathing season, and one fatal day Mr Poyntz, accompanied by his two sons, two young lady visitors, and three boatmen, went out in a so-called pleasure boat, leaving the youngest daughter, Isabella Poyntz,[1] in tears because she was not permitted to accompany them. From the windows, which gave upon the beach, the agonised mother saw that boat capsize, and as far as I remember

[1] Afterwards wife of second Marquess of Exeter.

what I have been told, one boatman and my uncle were the only survivors. The latter was brought to shore in an insensible state, and it was some time before he recovered consciousness. By these two accidents of drowning, both families of Browne-Montague and Poyntz became extinct in the male line.

The tragedy occurred when I was a child, and while we were yet at Sheerness, but I can still recall my mother's piercing shriek when the awful intelligence was broken to her. By this means Mr Poyntz's daughters became co-heiresses, and at the death of their father his property and estates were sold, and Cowdray passed into the hands of strangers.

I cannot refrain from mentioning a circumstance which interested me at the time very much, having always entertained a great predilection for "ghost stories." I had a pretty, quaint, low-roofed room at Cowdray, opening into the common passage on one side, and to a narrow little winding staircase, leading to the garden, on the other. I was constantly attracted by knocks at that door, and in the frequent practice of saying "Come in" to some imaginary person. I had not the slightest fear, but was, of course, laughed at for my ridiculous fancies. I therefore found some consolation (although I was very wrong to do so) when informed that on certain improvements being made, and the little staircase done away with, the skeleton of a child was discovered lying at the bottom of the steps leading from my room; but who does not love to exclaim "I told you so!"

Beautiful Cowdray! How many happy days rise before

me as I write the name! How many delightful walks in that enchanted wood, especially when escorted by "Courage," the gigantic St Bernard. Him I was allowed to take with me in my walks abroad, on condition that I led him by a chain, as he was a decidedly sporting character. Well do I remember one such walk with him. I had fastened his chain round my waist, to leave my hands free, when lo! the game was afoot, and off started Courage, carrying me with him in a wild and impetuous course. Every moment I expected to be dashed to pieces against a root, or to be thrown down and dragged at his heels; but gathering up my strength, and calling up all the presence of mind that was left me, I encircled the trunk of one of the smaller trees in a frenzied embrace, and contrived to arrest the headlong career of Courage, in time to avoid a catastrophe to both of us.

I revelled in the gallops in the park with my uncle (whom I simply adored), my sister, and our cousins, for we one and all loved horses and rode well, and to some extent justified an answer made to me by a farmer's wife, when I asked her one day for the loan of her horse for a ride.

"Certainly, Miss Mary," she said, "with great pleasure. The farmer will always lend you or your sister his best horse, for he well knows what capital *horse-ladies* you are."

I would fain make my readers acquainted with some of the characteristics of a beloved member of our family, who exercised a wonderful influence on all who surrounded him. Yet when I say that my uncle Poyntz was of a genial humour, a man of the world, a citizen of the world,

popular among all classes, all ages and both sexes, ever welcome abroad and adored at home, I am but too well aware that I fail in conveying any idea of his especial individuality.

Possessed with deep feeling and deep thought, there was a constant ripple on the surface. What in those days was called "persiflage," and bears but a faint resemblance to the modern "chaff," was in him a science, and no way like the constrained attempt at wit, from which every *point* is excluded, that but too often makes the "fun" of the practised joker. How often he put the respect and reticence of his servants to the test. I have seen them compelled to busy themselves with the plate on the sideboard, turning their backs on the dinner-table, while their shoulders shook with uncontrollable laughter. For us young ones there was usually a challenge for some playful encounter, and we were obliged to keep our wits sharpened in order to meet the attack and reply to the sally. He was a Liberal in politics, as were all the men of our family on both sides. The term Liberal was then accepted in its literal sense, and did not mean blind devotion to a revolutionary ideal. My father's views, as far as I can remember them, were inclined to be ultra, but I am grateful to record that in so burning a question as that of Catholic Emancipation, both my uncles and my father strongly advocated the redress of grievances which had long been a blot on our nation. For myself, I scarcely troubled my little head about politics, and when election time came round, I always voted in my heart for the man who was my friend, and

up to a very late period in my existence, "men and not measures," was my shibboleth. But, like many others, in my late years "J'ai changé tout cela," and the man I love best in the world, whomsoever that might be, would carry my worst wishes with him to the poll, if he assisted the Gladstonians in undermining the constitution of England and imperilling the safety of the throne; for I can never forget that in the times of the Civil Wars my great ancestor, Lord Cork, with his four sons fought at the battle of Bandon Bridge, on the side of the Cavaliers, and that one of the gallant brothers sealed his loyalty with his blood and left his life upon the field.

CHAPTER VII

MY GRANDMOTHER'S MAID

I MUST now devote a short chapter to a record of a faithful friend and retainer of my mother's family, whose sterling worth and amusing peculiarities deserve especial mention.

When my uncle, Mr Poyntz, married, he went to live at his wife's beautiful estate of Cowdray Park, and his ancestral home of Midgham was let to strangers. It had not been long in the family. Anna Maria Mordaunt, first cousin to the "great Earl of Peterborough," was maid of honour to Queen Caroline, wife of George II., who is said to have made Midgham, with the adjacent park and grounds, a wedding present to the said Maid of Honour on her marriage with Stephen Poyntz, a distinguished diplomatist, and minister at Stockholm and other foreign courts. There was a whisper that Her Majesty's kind intention was never fulfilled in a pecuniary point of view, and that the purchase money came out of the bridegroom's pocket. But whether this be a fact or not, I am unable to state. It is certain, however, that the Queen retained a great friendship for Mrs Poyntz, whom she appointed governess (as it was termed) to her son,

William, Duke of Cumberland. A very large painting recorded this event, and was a great object of interest to me in my young days. I do not know the name of the artist, but well remember the peculiar group of three personages—Queen Caroline, in regal purple and ermine, presenting her eight-year-old son, in square cut coat, short breeches, and dainty silk stockings, to my great-grandmother, who figured as Minerva in full panoply.

Mrs Poyntz was an amiable and gentle-hearted woman, as her letters testify, and can in no way be considered responsible for the subsequent career of the Royal Duke. I have in my possession a most interesting and touching letter from Lady Cromartie, whose husband was under sentence of death, in 1715, as a Jacobite, in which she makes a most earnest appeal to Mrs Poyntz to intercede with the Queen in behalf of the prisoner, and, to the best of my belief, the intercession was of some avail. At all events, Lord Cromartie's life was spared, although his title was attainted, and was only revived in 1861, in the person of the late Duchess of Sutherland.[1] The Duke of Cumberland was a frequent visitor at Midgham, and there was a suite of apartments called by his name The house, as I have said before, was constantly let during my uncle's life, but in a small, quaint cottage on the skirts of the park, lived, at the time of which I am speaking, an old lady, who had been in the service of my grandmother as lady's maid, and still occupied a

[1] Anne Hay McKenzie, married to third Duke of Sutherland, died 1889.

place of trust in that of my uncle. We occasionally visited this dear old retainer of our family, and one summer I accompanied my mother and my brother Charles to Midgham Cottage.

To me that visit was a real holiday. We all loved Illidge (for that was her name) dearly, and were much amused by her eccentricities, while the life in a real *bonâ fide* cottage seemed to me like a page out of some rural novel.

Illidge was a short, rather thick-set woman, with silver hair, bushy eyebrows, bright eyes, and a most determined expression. She wore the dress which was in vogue in the last generation: a short plain, scanty gown of fawn-coloured silk, low in the neck and short in the sleeves, a white muslin fichu, and apron and black mittens. There is a picture at Drumlanrig Castle of the Duchess of Queensberry in exactly the same costume, which I saw years afterwards when on a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch.

Illidge had very aristocratic notions, and nothing ruffled her dignity more than when we—my brother or myself—marched into the kitchen and called to Sarah, the sole indoor domestic of the little household, asking her for what we wanted, instead of ringing the bell in the parlour, although the parlour and kitchen were next door to each other.

"Just as you please, my dear," said Illidge, looking extremely angry, "but I've always been accustomed to gentlepeople ringing the bell, and not coming into the kitchen at all hours, and making so free with the under-servants!"

She had an inveterate hatred for the occupants of Midgham House. She was quite aware that her master was always glad when the house was let and warmed and kept in repair by being lived in, but if the angel Gabriel had come down from heaven to become the tenant of Midgham House, Illidge would have hated and despised him.

On one occasion I composed a grandiloquent poem, having for its theme the courtship and marriage of Anna Maria Mordaunt and Stephen Poyntz, which I wrote out in my best hand, and presented to Illidge, who agreed with me in considering it a very fine epic.

My mother, who loved her early home dearly, did not share Illidge's views respecting the tenants, or visit with her wrath those who liked the place well enough to hire it. So one day, in spite of frowns and angry looks from our hostess, she called on me to go with her to pay our respects to the tenants in question.

"Will you lend me the poem," I asked in a very conciliatory voice, "to take with me to the house? I think Mrs —— would very much like to see it." "That she never shall," said Illidge, in a tone of such defiant exasperation that I was indeed very sorry I had spoken.

Before I go any further, I cannot refrain from telling a story I heard from Illidge's own lips—indeed I published it in "Notes and Queries," and more than once imparted it to literary friends. Very little credence has been awarded to this anecdote, but for my own part, I cannot doubt the authority whence it was derived.

The heroine of the little romance I am about to relate

was no less a personage than Mrs Garrick, the wife of the eminent tragedian. In the year 1746 the play-going public were thrown into a state of great excitement in consequence of the appearance of a young and beautiful dancer named La Violette. She hailed from Vienna, and had been introduced by the *Maître de Ballet* at that court with other young ladies, to dance with the children of the Empress Maria Theresa. Her Majesty took a great fancy to the girl, whose family name was Veigel, which in Austrian patois signifies violet, and the Empress gave her the name of Mademoiselle Violette. It is not mentioned in the life of Garrick that she ever appeared on the public stage at Vienna, but she came over to England and made her *début* as a dancer at Drury Lane on the 3rd December 1746.

Horace Walpole in his amusing and gossiping letters, in which he minds everybody else's business, tells us how the London world, especially the fashionable portion, went mad after Mademoiselle Violette, and how, in particular, the Countesses of Burlington and Talbot rivalled each other in seeking her society and showing her favour; the former having her portrait taken, and carrying her off to Chiswick, and chaperoning her on many occasions. Lord Burlington[1] shared in his wife's predilection for the lovely young Austrian. Lady Burlington, indeed, often played the part of mother to La Violette (attending her to the theatre, and throwing a warm pelisse over her, when she came out),

[1] Richard, fourth Earl of Cork and third Earl of Burlington, K.G., born 1695, died 1753; married Dorothy Saville, daughter of William, Marquis of Halifax.

and at length her noble friends invited her to take up her abode at Burlington House. One day as Lord Burlington was passing La Violette's open door, he was attracted by her singing, and stopped to speak and compliment her on her sweet voice. As he did so, his eyes fell upon a picture, whether miniature or not, I am unable to say, and in an agitated tone he enquired whose portrait it was. La Violette replied that it was her mother's. Explanations followed, dates were examined, small relics in the girl's possession inspected, and, if I may be excused a vulgarism, two and two were put together, and it was proved to Lord Burlington's entire conviction that La Violette was no other than his own daughter—her mother being a beautiful artiste, with whom he had had a *liaison* on the Continent, but after a violent quarrel, a separation had taken place, and they never met again.

Of the particulars of her mother's connection with Lord Burlington, I am entirely ignorant; I merely give the story as it was related to me, with the only details I can recall, by Illidge, who had it from the lips of a niece of Lord Burlington's housekeeper. The latter, being in his service at the time of the incident, but having secrecy enjoined on her, kept silence till many years after.

On La Violette's marriage with David Garrick, in 1749, Lord Burlington bestowed on her a dowry of £6,000, and one of the biographers of the great actor says that this generosity on his lordship's part gave rise to the conjecture that she was his own child, going on, however, to argue, by dates and diaries, that the English nobleman had not been on the Continent at the

time specified, and that the girl was the daughter of Viennese parents of the name of Viegel.

It would be useless and tedious to enter into all the minutiæ of that bygone history. I merely mention the facts as related to me by one who thought it necessary to speak of it in a confidential manner, although everybody connected with the little romance had long passed away. The Garrick union was a very happy one, and for thirty years the husband and wife were inseparable. The widow survived him for a long period, and it was my good fortune to see her when I was quite a child. We encountered her in the lobby of a theatre, as she was making her way out between two female attendants, and my father said to me: "That is Mrs Garrick, Mary; some day you will be glad to think that you have seen her." She wore a strange costume of quilted white silk, somewhat resembling a dressing-gown, and a large mob cap, and though very aged, bore undoubted traces of former beauty. I believe it was shortly before her death. She died at Hampton, having nearly attained her hundredth year, at a house which her husband bequeathed to her, and which still bears the name, if I am not mistaken, of "Garrick's Villa."

To return to Illidge. The dear old soul continued to live on in her lowly cot, with two companions, a "gal" to do the housework, and an octogenarian, between her and whom a tender friendship existed, he having been in old days the gardener at the Great House. She became blind, but, old as she was, retained her activity and impetuosity of nature.

On one occasion she had been driven in to New-

bury, to collect some "monies" (whether for rent or not I am unable to say) belonging to her master, and that night she went to bed as usual, with the key of the escritoire, in which she had deposited the money, in her ample pockets under her pillow. She was startled, although not alarmed (for nothing could alarm her undaunted spirit) by hearing footsteps on the stairs, and the opening of her bedroom door. A man's gruff voice was heard at her bedside, and the faint sound of the poor maid in hysterics above stairs, for the burglar had locked in the two other inmates of the cottage, though, alas! there was little help to be expected from either of them.

"Now, then," said the robber, "hand us over that money that you got to-day in Newbury, every penny of it."

She started up in bed, and turning her sightless eyes on the intruder, exclaimed, in her most strident tones: "*No, I won't, you villain! What's yer name?*"

It may easily be believed that her nocturnal visitor was not communicative in this particular, neither did the courage of the old lady influence his conduct. He went on to prove to her that "he would stand no nonsense," and when at length she had unwillingly produced the keys in question, he insisted on her accompanying him downstairs, to show him the spot where the treasure lay hid. So up she got, and, guarding against the cold by putting on some of the multifarious petticoats which she always wore, the blind old heroine groped her way downstairs, all the time heaping imprecations on the head of her persecutor, and foretelling for him that retribution he deserved. She had a wonderful knack of finding her way by remembering the positions of

the pieces of furniture in her small sitting-room, and Illidge's prediction came true. The burglar, besides appropriating the money in question, took a fancy to some trinkets in the drawer, and some months—if I mistake not, a year afterwards—one of them was found in a pawnbroker's shop in Newbury, and identified by a person who had seen it in Illidge's possession. There was no doubt about it, for it was a mourning ring, with a date and inscription, which rendered the identification conclusive. The pawnbroker remembered the woman who had brought it, who turned out to be an accomplice of the burglar's, and in this manner he was tracked and convicted.

And so ends all the adventures that I can recall of one of the most attached and zealous retainers of which any family could boast. Illidge, like the more celebrated personage with whom I have connected her name, nearly attained her hundredth year, before she departed from this sublunary scene.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR HOUSEHOLD

AFTER treating of the worthy member of the household of a former generation, I am now desirous to make some mention of two or three personages who occupied different grades in my mother's family, and the recollection of whom is intimately connected with different periods of my life.

In my youth, it was the custom for servants to remain much longer in families than it is at present; and my mother was so kind and gentle a mistress that her domestics did not consider they would be likely to "better themselves" (that most ambiguous expression!) by mere change of situation.

First in love and consideration came the nurse, Brooks, or "Brookey," who had already spent many years under my parents' roof before I was born. She was the idol of the nursery, a beautiful, dignified old lady, full of quaint sayings and original notions, rendered still more racy by frequent lapses into "Malapropisms," for "she was no scholard, my dear," and would call Albemarle Street "Foldemol Street," and assured us all that her "nevvy" who lived at "Brummerzer" (Bermondsey) was very clever

in "edicating" young men, and teaching them "'Mathics," (mathematics). When told of the marriage of one of our cousins, she inquired if there were "no chance of any gentleman paying his 'distresses' to her sister"? Brookey could never forget that she had been a beauty, and when on the wrong side of seventy she sat for her portrait, to a friend of mine, I found she was not well pleased with the execution, but it was some time before I could discern the reason. At last, however, it became evident that she objected to a stick which the artist had placed in her hand.

"Just as you please, my dear, but I should have thought a rose would have looked nicer!"

Dear old soul! my youngest brother and I shed bitter tears at parting from her, but we never lost sight of her until her death, as she paid us frequent visits both in London and at Hampton Court.

Another prominent person in "Our Household" was Rachel Day, the lady's maid, a most consequential and important character in her own eyes, even before she was advanced to the rank of a courtier, by leaving my mother's service for that of my sister, the Maid of Honour. During a visit we paid at Longleat, Day was found on one occasion by the head housemaid, wandering about the corridors.

"Can I be of any use?" said the housemaid, in a patronising tone; "I daresay you feel lost in such a large house."

"Oh dear no," replied the Abigail, with an air of offended dignity, "we live in a much larger one at home."

The housemaid was bewildered and humiliated, but

Day had reason, as our French cousins would say, for that "home" was the Palace of Hampton Court. When my sister became Maid of Honour to Queen Adelaide, Day assumed, as in duty bound, an extra dignity and courtliness of manner, and invariably talked of when "We go to Windsor," when "Our waiting begins," and the like, and indeed to the end of her life she considered herself one of the pillars of the throne.

At the same time she was a stickler for etiquette, and very strict as to the rules of precedence in the "room," as it is now called—in those benighted days, the "housekeeper's room."

One evening she came to my mother to propound the following weighty question: "Do I follow or precede the Honourable Mrs Spalding's maid? for I do not know if a Viscount's daughter goes before the wife of the younger son of an earl."

Poor Day! she lost rank, but even that was preferable to proving her ignorance. She was very apt at assuming, or perhaps I had better say aping, the tastes of her employers, and during a prolonged sojourn at Florence, had imbibed a great predilection for the Mediæval era, as far as the sound went, for I do not think the epithet Middle Ages conveyed any definite idea to her mind. She married late in life a Court official in a small line, who occupied the post of a clerk, or what-not, attached to the Palace of Hampton Court, and I well remember, in the gorgeous description she gave me of her own wedding, that she mentioned with pride, "my friend, Mrs Chapman, wore quite a Middle Age satin."

The name of Henry Mansell frequently comes back to my memory as intimately connected with the fortunes of our family. He served one or another member thereof for a period of more than half a century, emulating in his affection and loyalty to the name of Boyle, the characteristic devotion of a Caleb Balderstone. His peculiarities made him a prominent character in our annals, and he was so well known among our literary friends as to figure in the pages of a novel, which was published at the time, anonymously, by an eminent writer of the day. In the volume, entitled "De Lunatico Inquirendo," if still in print, may be found the portrait of our faithful and eccentric dependent.

Henry was very fond of travelling, and took great delight in lionising different cities which we visited; but in one respect he was a staunch John Bull—no power on earth could persuade him that when he resided in Florence he could possibly be called a foreigner. "No, ma'am," he used to say, "the Italians are foreigners, but I am an Englishman!" Yet he liked Italy and the Italians, and during a summer we passed at Munich busied himself, with an Italian grammar and dictionary, in preparation for his journey to Rome. The language of Goethe and Schiller had no charm for him, and by means of his Italian studies and his own quick intelligence he contrived to make himself understood, although in a somewhat unidiomatic and ungrammatical way.

For instance, one morning when starting from the door of the hotel where we had passed the night, the large Berline in which we were travelling was surrounded by a host of beggars. My mother had caused some "largesse"

to be distributed, especially to the woman in charge of the blind beggar, who invariably figures in the group, when, to Henry's indignation, she repeated her demands, and was bold enough to ask for more. Then he turned upon her in all the eloquent indignation of his newly-acquired language, "Volete, prendete tutto, prendete carozza e cavalli!" Poor Henry! He knew "Volete" was right, and "prendete" was right—how could he imagine the combination could be wrong? I well knew that nothing pleased him more than to be trusted with messages or directions to the Italian servants. Therefore, one day when driving in Florence, I said to him, "Henry, pray tell the coachman that the carriage window is broken." "Ehe, cocchiere, il bicchiere é rotto." But he invariably contrived to make himself understood, and was a great favourite with the Italians, from his easy good humour and willingness to help on all occasions.

In addition to his other talents, Henry was an adept with his needle, an excellent cook, and an incomparable waiter. He was slow of hearing, which perhaps sharpened his powers of vision, and we got into a habit of communicating with him by signs. He identified himself with our family in rather a comical manner sometimes. "It is getting quite late in September, Henry," said my sister-in-law to him one day, "and we have had no game sent us yet; it is very odd." "Very true, Ma'am, very true," was the sympathetic reply; "I think it is too bad. Why, there is Lord Cork, the nearest relation we have, to think he should not send us a single partridge!"

Henry was in his way a moralist, and came to me once

in great indignation after reading a paragraph in some scandalous paper, with the sapient remark that he thought "Every lady was getting as bad as one another."

Poor, good, faithful fellow, his death was an untimely one! After retiring from service he had taken a small cottage at Weedon, in Northamptonshire, and was often employed as waiter or to carry errands for the neighbouring gentry, who knew and respected him. One day he was missed at home, and was sought, and found near a rickety bridge where he had slipped and fallen head foremost into a small stream. Life was already extinct, and on the bank, watching over that prostrate form, sat his faithful little dog, with that despairing, wistful gaze, so well known to every true lover of the canine species.

Before concluding this chapter, I must make mention of our governess, the last, and by far the favourite, for she had two or three predecessors. Miss Richardson, or "Lizzie Dickey," as we children fondly called her, was the daughter of Joseph Richardson, a literary man, who, if I mistake not, had been a co-lessee with the celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan, of one of the principal London theatres. Lizzie was, in consequence, dramatically inclined, and fostered my early taste for the stage, as well as that for romantic fiction. How delightful were the afternoons that my brother Cavendish and I passed with this genial companion beneath the shade of the spreading ilex or flowering chestnuts in Bushey Park, sometimes armed with a small luncheon basket and a precious volume of Walter Scott. I could easily point out the spot now where I became convinced in my own mind that I could never be

happy again, for Lizzie had just read aloud to us the passage in "Old Mortality" where Lord Evandale dropped lifeless from his horse. We were expecting the return of my father and mother that same evening, an event to which I had been looking forward for some time, yet what did it matter now? What consolation could I possibly find since the hero of my idolatry was "no more!"

CHAPTER IX

BRIGHTON—SCHOOLDAYS

BRIGHTON was a favourite resort of my dear mother, both before and after I went to school there; not only on account of its healthy and invigorating air, but more especially because it was the home of her elder sister, Lady John Townshend, Lord John being the proprietor of two houses in the King's Road, called Little and Great Bush. The smaller of the two was often lent to my mother for the winter months: there was a door of communication between the two houses, and the members of our family were as often in the one as in the other, both at meal and at other times.

We considered it great fun to be allowed to carry our dishes and plates into Great Bush at dinner time, and to turn that usually solemn banquet into a species of picnic, although the dinner in question could not always be considered solemn.

My uncle Lord John, who was already advanced in years when I first remember him, was a very peculiar person. As I have before said, he had been the friend of Fox, and was a Whig of the whiggest, a man of talent and education, a poet and a scholar. He was what of

yore was called "a testy old gentleman," but the children entertained a great affection for him, combined with a certain degree of dread. He approved of my love (now genuine) of Shakespeare, and liked to hear me read or recite passages, on which he would enlarge, criticising and correcting my pronunciation of classical terms.

Lord John was a gourmet, and very particular in the matter of cuisine. He would often call to the footman, in the middle of dinner, and say in a querulous tone: "Tell the cook to come to me this moment," which occasioned rather an awkward pause. Then, on the entrance of the poor *artiste*, with very red face from the combined effects of the kitchen fire and mental confusion, he would address her in a voice of thunder: "Pray have the goodness to taste that dish, and tell me if you do not agree with me that it is beastly."

In spite of all these eccentricities, I was very fond of my uncle, and used to sit for hours talking to him by the side of his chair, for he was a martyr to gout. Mrs Fitzherbert was a friend of the Townshends, and lived at Brighton at the same time; she gave many parties, and when charades and tableaux were the order of the day, or rather night, I was allowed to be of the party, while still a child.

One of the most shining lights of the dramatic company was Lady Anna Maria Elliot, daughter of Lord Minto, afterwards the wife of Sir Rufane Donkin. She was as kind-hearted as she was witty, a great friend of my mother's, and the idol of us children. One evening the word acted was "champagne." In the first syllable,

"sham," Lady Anna Maria out-did herself, and being a thorough artist, sacrificed all considerations of personal vanity to the requirements of her *rôle*. Never shall I forget her impersonation of Miss Rosina Falballa, returning from the ball—an elderly spinster, with a flaxen wig crowned by a wreath of roses and otherwise youthfully accoutred, calling her maid hastily, retiring into an adjoining room, leaving the door ajar, and from her hiding-place, handing out to the attendant abigail all those mysterious appendages of the toilet which gave the title to the first scene of the charade, sham of all kinds; the wig, the ratelier, the paddings, culminating in what is now familiarly termed a "dress improver," but in those less genteel days, "a bustle." It would be difficult to imagine the screams of laughter; suffice it to say her ladyship brought down the house.

To my great delight, my services were enlisted when the tableaux began, and I appeared as Ishmael drinking water from the hand of Hagar (if I remember rightly, Mrs Dawson Damer); but more delightful still, because dramatic and historical, in the parting of Lord Russell with his wife and children. The representative of the patriot lord was one of the handsomest men of his time, Frederick Seymour, whose beauty proved hereditary in the case of his daughters, Lady Clifden and Lady Spencer. I was not a bad little historian, and had already shed early tears over the fate of the gentle Rachel's husband; and when I was placed in the proper position, clinging round the knee of the parent from whom I was about to be separated for ever, I thought

to myself, William Lord Russell must have really looked like that handsome and noble representative, so I called up my best look of sorrow and pathos, and threw an upward glance, such as I was sure would have been the expression of little Katey Russell on that melancholy occasion.

How wounded was I in my histrionic feelings when Mr Seymour exclaimed: "Oh, if you look at me in that ridiculous manner, I shall die of laughing."

"Ridiculous!" Was that an epithet to apply to my highly conceived and, I believed, wonderfully carried out embodiment of filial anguish? It was most mortifying, and so I was condemned to throw all the concentrated expression on the calf of my father's leg.

Only one more of that evening's tableaux can I call to mind. It was that of the kneeling infant Samuel, personated by Miss Morier, afterwards Mrs Edward Grimston, then a lovely child. Mrs Fitzherbert, our hostess, though of course at that time far advanced in years, had a fresh, fair complexion and fine aquiline features, and had great remains of the beauty and charm which had captivated the fancy, although it could not ensure the constancy, of the fickle-hearted monarch, George IV.

In the course of time our favourite governess, as I have before mentioned, left us, and my father announced his determination not to appoint a successor. Here was a dilemma, for my mother had pledged her word to me that I should never go to school, a resolution which she would not alter without my consent; but during her stay at

Brighton, she had heard of an exceptional establishment, kept by a certain Miss Poggi, the daughter of an Italian emigrant. I was a student by nature, and loved learning for its own sake, so I easily acquiesced in my mother's project, and I took up my abode at No. 10 Regency Square. But I did not calculate on the terrible home-sickness which would ensue, or the miserable first night I should pass under that roof; my pillow was literally deluged with my tears, and my sobbing brought the English teacher to my bedside, who did all in her power to comfort me, and became from that moment my tried and trusty friend. Poor Ellen!—she was very kind and very handsome, and long after I left school she was permitted, at my request, to come and pass some of her holidays with me at Hampton Court.

I spent nearly four years under the care of Miss Poggi, with whom I became an especial favourite, perhaps because I feared her less than all the rest of the pupils. She was a most exemplary woman, but strict even to severity, and I can well remember the sudden hush which invariably announced her appearance in the school-room. The French teacher was also greatly feared by her scholars, but the gentle Ellen and the dear old lady who taught us Italian were beloved by all. In our plan of education, different days were apportioned for different lessons, and I still have a lingering love (the result of association) for Tuesdays and Thursdays, when dancing, poetry and parsing (which I always liked) were the order of the day; while Mondays and Fridays still convey a dreary idea to my mind of detested copy-books and smudged slates. Why did those

dreadful pence, I asked myself, present a different total every time I added them up, and why, when I tried to prove a sum, did I only prove it was wrong? Then such groans and scrapings of the slate pencils, the whole aspect of things rendered more confused by the occasional dropping of a large tear. Very nearly the same was the story of my music lessons.

Pause, gentle reader!—do not accuse me hastily of having no music in my soul, and consequently being fit for "treasons, stratagems and spoils." I loved music, but had no talent, and though I had sufficient ear to detect what was wrong, I found it most difficult to *practise* what was right—no uncommon case in matters of morality.

In our competition for prizes, the greater number of "extremely well" depended more on industry than proficiency, and I was diligent and laboured at my oar; so one Prize Day the Silver Medal for Music was awarded to me. When I look back on this startling incident, I blush to confess that I attribute this decoration to the over-indulgence of our little music mistress; but like many other *décorées* I felt very proud of the unmerited honour.

My dancing mistress, Madame Michau, had (if I may be allowed to say so) better reason to be satisfied with me; for, with the exception of my dear friend and namesake, Mary Broadwood, I was the best dancer in the school, and my teacher was never tired of instructing her two model pupils in boleros, cachucas, tambourine dances and the like, At that time, dancing in Society was reckoned an accom-

plishment, and upheld as an art, and it was not the fashion to slope and lounge through what is termed in modern slang, "Square Dances."

I can scarcely imagine a prettier sight than that presented by those frequent children's balls, given by the King and Queen at the Pavilion at Brighton. The building, as we all know, was a ridiculous Cockney erection of a Russo-Chinese character, still, few scenes could have been prettier than the interior of the principal room when filled by groups of gaily dressed and, for the most part, lovely children; for I agree with an R.A. of my acquaintance who said that there is nothing on earth to compare with the beauty of a little "English Swell."

Now, while I am treating of Monsieur and Madame Michau, I cannot omit to insert an anecdote of the former. Some years after I had left school, during a short stay in Brighton, I paid a visit to the dear old couple, from whom I received an enthusiastic welcome. "Enchanté!" said Monsieur, "de vous revoir, Mademoiselle—c'est à dire, sans doute, Madame?" I replied in a tone of mock melancholy: "Hélas non! Monsieur Michau, toujours Mademoiselle." The good old man gazed at me with pity bordering on contempt, then, shrugging his shoulders, exclaimed in a dejected, though somewhat sarcastic, tone, "Ah! Mademoiselle, si ce n'était que votre danse. . . ."

While yet a school-girl, during the Christmas holidays there was a great deal of juvenile dissipation in the way of balls, and so forth, the most delightful of all, in my opinion, being those given by Dr Everard at his celebrated establishment for young gentlemen, familiarly called the "Young

House of Lords," from the aristocracy of the pupils. My partners here were legion, including the late and the present Lords Northampton,[1] Mr Frederick Leveson Gower,[2] and my cousins, the sons of Sir Augustus Clifford. Willy Clifford, afterwards Admiral Sir William Clifford, caused great laughter among his school-fellows, who overheard him one night asking me to dance as follows: "Mary, will you have the honour of dancing with me?" Many men, I doubt not—if they spake their thoughts—might address a young lady in the same terms, but it is decidedly not the custom: which reminds me of a quaint reply I received once at a servants' ball from a Somersetshire farmer, when in consideration of the difference of our social position I asked him to dance Sir Roger de Coverley with me. "Well, Miss Mary," said honest Farmer Ashby, "I can't say as I see any objection."

I need not enlarge here on the subject of Dr Everard's school, for every reader of "Dombey and Son" must be intimately acquainted with the interior of that establishment, where, as is recorded in the delightful book just mentioned, the whole of the afternoon preceding the ball their house was pervaded by a strong smell of singed hair and curling-tongs. In those days, curly locks were considered an indispensable accessory to full dress. Yes, I did enjoy those merry dances at Dr Everard's, and I was proud of my popularity among my school-boy friends; yet—and this belongs surely to confessions of which I

[1] Charles, third Marquess of Northampton, died in 1877. William, fourth Marquess, born in 1818, died in 1897.

[2] Hon. Frederick Leveson Gower, second son of first Earl Granville.

ought to be ashamed—the eventful night came, still at Brighton, when I was to make my *début*, as a grown-up young lady, at a real grown-up ball. There was rapture in the idea, and yet, after the fashion of most earthly pleasures, there was a drawback. I never had any secrets from my mother, and to her I carried my fears and apprehensions.

"Dearest," I said, "you see I am very small, and, I am afraid, look dreadfully young (a fear that does not long survive in the female mind), and now you know, although to-night is a grown-up ball, I have no doubt some of these horrid boys will be coming up asking me to dance" (false and fickle ingrate!). "I shall feel so dreadfully ashamed, and shall not know what to do." My mother, who ought, I think, to have read me a homily, laughed outright, and promised to tell the lady of the house that she was not to judge from appearances, for that I was really "*out*." The hostess was worthy of the confidence placed in her by the mother of the *débutante*, for the first man she introduced to me was an officer, quartered in the town, whose height was six feet six. Then did I feel a certain degree of doubt, mingled with a natural feeling of elation. Could I reach up to his shoulder, or he down to my waist, in the waltz that was just beginning? I believe it was the first time I had ever danced with a regular soldier, but in the course of my Hampton Court life, where the only dancing men belonged to the regiments stationed there, and at Hounslow, I have always maintained that I have danced with the whole of the Army List, or at least with the Cavalry portion thereof. In some localities the

female community are in the minority, and I remember a midshipman writing home from the West Indies: "We went ashore last night to a very pleasant dance, to which they were obliged to ask every girl in the place without distinction, or how else could we have *manned* our ball?"

But I am anticipating events, for I have not yet left school. If all had gone well with the studies, the pupils were permitted to celebrate their birthdays by some festivity, and my favourite namesake, Mary Broadwood, and I had for the last two years kept ours together, as they were within a few days of each other. So we set to work, she and I, and made a very free translation from the Italian of one of Alberto Nota's celebrated comedies, and having cast the company in our own minds, we gained Miss Poggi's permission to give a dramatic representation of *The Bachelor Philosopher*, in which the two authors were to perform the two principal male characters. My namesake appeared in what our German neighbours call the "title-role," and looked very bonnie in a dainty court dress, which showed off her beautiful leg and foot to perfection. And here I must pause to observe that Miss Poggi withstood the request which Madame Michau made, that her husband might accompany her on the night of the performance. "For, you see," said Miss Poggi, "all our actors are ladies." But on the evening in question, Madame Michau arrived in company with her *belle-mère*, a lady of rather a masculine appearance, whose chin had a suspiciously blue colouring; but no questions were asked, and the two French *ladies* took the places reserved for them.

The character I had selected for myself was that of an Italian nobleman, whose whole soul was entwined around his genealogical tree. My costume consisted of—oh! pride and rapture!—a yellow tunic and blue satin cloak, all glittering with spangles, and a *bonâ fide* page's dress, borrowed from the wardrobe of Drury Lane Theatre, by the influence of Elizabeth Richardson; while my fair locks were duly powdered and combed and put into a black satin bag, so that I flattered myself I presented a manly and venerable appearance.

The prettiest girl in the school, Emily Elves by name, was our *jeune première*, while an elderly spinster was very well impersonated by another member of the community. When the curtain dropped, dancing began, and, in respect of my "noble birth and ancestral tendencies," I was permitted to lead out the charming daughter[1] of the reigning Duke of Bedford. I wonder if she can recall that night as vividly as I can, but if she should ever honour these pages by reading them so far, let me take this opportunity of assuring her that I consider her one of the most delightful partners I ever had, and I have had many since that day.

I have omitted to mention that our school, which was originally situated in Regency Square, had been removed to the extreme end of Brunswick Terrace. Indeed, Miss Poggi was one of the first to go so far away from the frequented part of Brighton. I well remember once, in the dead of night, being roused by hearing shots fired

[1] Lady Louisa Russell, afterwards wife of James, first Duke of Abercorn.

immediately under my window, followed by shouts and cries. The next morning the mystery was solved. There had been an encounter between smugglers and the coastguard; one man had been severely wounded, and had only escaped death by hiding in some miraculous manner. Then one of the officers of the coastguard called upon Miss Poggi, and complained that to the best of his belief the offender had been secreted in her house by one of the maidservants. The reply to that complaint was a natural one: "I have not inquired into the matter, but I should think it most probable that if a woman saw any man flying for his life, she would do her best to save him, without stopping to inquire into the cause of his flight."

In those days, be it remembered, "smuggling" was considered but a venial crime, and many, especially amongst the gentler sex, were found willing to wink at it.

So wayward is human nature, that I believe I shed as many tears at leaving school as I did on my first arrival, overjoyed though I was at the prospect of returning home for good.

CHAPTER X

VISITS IN CUMBERLAND AND LEICESTERSHIRE[1] ACCESSION OF WILLIAM IV.

THERE were few happier beings than myself, the morning I started with my mother, my brother and sister, for Greystoke Castle in Cumberland—Cumberland, which appeared in those days a journey of delightful adventure,

[1] I have made some endeavours, but without success, to fix the date of this visit. It was after 1826, and must have been before 1829, in which year Isabella Howard, one of the four sisters, married Lord Suffolk. Lord Henry Howard had died in 1824, so his widow was living in the house of her son Henry, on whom Greystoke had been entailed by Charles, tenth Duke of Norfolk. Mr Crackenthorpe was born in either 1788 or 1789, for he told my sister-in-law, Lady Rachel Howard, that his first recollection of a political event was the French Revolution, when he was four years old. He lived to nominate Mr Stafford Howard twice for Parliament, and died in 1886. Mr Howard of Corby was descended from a second son of Lord Carlisle. Adela, or Adeliza, was his youngest daughter, and, as are all her family, a Roman Catholic.

The visit must have been after 1826, for in February of that year Charles, third Lord Southampton, married Harriet, daughter of the Hon. Fitzroy Stanhope, and my aunt, in describing her visit to his house, makes no reference to a recent marriage. The brother-in-law must have been Captain Robert Stanhope, who married, in 1830, Miss Ward.

not unattended by that vague sense of peril which enhanced the charm of so long and wild an expedition. If our destination had been the Rocky Mountains, or even the Steppes of Tartary, I do not think my anticipations could have been of a wilder and more romantic nature. Was I not going to the far away and scarcely civilised district of the Borderland, so near to Walter Scott's own country, along the great North road, with its recollections of Meg Merrilies and Jeannie Deans, and the names of the different towns at which we were to sleep, suggesting well-known events in history and fiction? I am speaking of a journey which is now accomplished between breakfast and dinner.

Our destination, as I said before, was the picturesque domain of Greystoke, where Lady Henry Howard,[1] my mother's fast friend, lived with her son Henry, and her four daughters.[2] Happy family, genial companions! Every day spent in that enchanting spot seemed to me like a page torn out of some favourite romance; and when I look back upon those past years, I feel my beloved friend Lady Suffolk will agree with me, in the new-fashioned language of the day, that that time was one of the very best of good times. We were a happy band, with the same pleasures, the same tastes, the same pursuits. As for me, my spirit was armed and ready for

[1] Elizabeth Long married Mr, afterwards Lord, Henry Howard, brother of Bernard, twelfth Duke of Norfolk.

[2] Henrietta Anna married Henry, third Earl of Carnarvon; Isabella Catharine married Charles, seventeenth Earl of Suffolk; Charlotte married James Buller, father of Sir Redvers Buller; Juliene married Sir John Ogilvay.

adventures of all kinds, though occasionally I was disappointed in my Quixotic anticipations.

Soon after my arrival, I had gone out alone into the wild park of Gobarrow, on a small mountain pony rejoicing in the classic name of "Pacolet," and very diminutive. Like Mazeppa, I "urged on my wild career," and naturally, the ground being quite new to me, lost my way: so far so good, just what a heroine of romance ought to do; so on I went, snatching a fearful joy, until I came to a large grip, which Pacolet prudently refused. I was trying to persuade him to clear the obstacle, when I perceived a man approaching, who promptly came to my rescue, a gentleman, not remarkable for youth or beauty, but at least chivalrous in his offer of assistance. I told him I was anxious to find my way back to Greystoke Castle. My new acquaintance offered to escort me, being bound for the same hospitable dwelling; this offer I gratefully declined, as it would have entailed a foot's pace, and I preferred a hand-gallop. Pacolet was comforted when he found the grip might be dispensed with, for I was turning my back on home; so following the directions given me, and with the help of a few landmarks, I reached Greystoke in safety, and on coming down to dinner, after a hurried toilette, encountered my friend. Our recognition occasioned much chaffing and bantering, and no small curiosity was manifested as to how I could have possibly made his acquaintance. He was a middle-aged, respectable-looking man, but for all that, the incident of our meeting seemed invested with interest, and when dinner was over, I enquired the name

of the stranger, with the secret hope that he might be something in the belted Will Howard line. I hope I shall be forgiven for having been disappointed when I learned that he bore the time-honoured name of Crackenthorpe.

"Oh those merry days when we were young"—those happy days at Greystoke! What rides, what stag hunts by beautiful Ulleswater, on foot, on horseback, in boat, up the fells, and on the lake. Untiring, strong, in all the pride of youth and joyous spirits, with those beloved friends, what wonder that I described myself to a distant correspondent on one occasion as having "the courage of a lion, the strength of an elephant, and the appetite of a wolf." Our feats of horsemanship would have done no discredit to a circus, and our palfreys were so well trained, that we used to dance quadrilles, or waltz in the most approved fashion, and I stoutly maintained that my chestnut, named Montilla, after the Cid's renowned steed, bore away the palm.

The castle contained, among many delights, a nice little theatre, and our performances were frequent. The dramas were for the most part home-made, but we thought them very fine, and, at all events, the comedies were "genteel." The Howards were all good actresses, and enjoyed acting, and I was in my element. I have a small sketch, done by one of the guests, of myself in the character of "Daffodil the Dandy," in a pea-green surtout, with a grand Brutus wig and waxed moustaches, a youth who was much taken up with his own charms and accomplishments.

One of the Howards as a stiff-starched old maid, and another as a bachelor of the same sort, renewing a by-

gone flirtation, were deservedly admired. Sometimes our performances took a tragic turn, and one evening when I was kneeling before a cruel tyrant, who menaced my life with up-lifted sword, a growl of thunder was heard, and our Scotch terrier, "Boch Dhu," who was in the audience, darted over the footlights, and flew at the murderer's throat, gaining for herself the honours of the evening.

I quitted Greystoke with a heavy heart, but before leaving Cumberland we paid a visit to Corby Castle, a beautiful spot, the house situated on an eminence overhanging the rushing river Eden, which was owned by another member of the noble family of Howard. The house had an especial interest for me (possessed as I have always been with a passion for ghost stories) on account of being haunted. To sleep in the celebrated chamber was the object of my ardent desire, and I gained rather an unwilling consent from Mrs Howard and my mother; the latter indeed insisted that my sister should be my bedfellow, lest I might become alarmed in the lone watches of the night. I laughed this idea to scorn, as the apparition, if it were visible, was that of the "radiant boy," the murdered Lord Thomas Howard, a lovely child in glistening white garments, his golden hair crowned with flowers and surmounted by a brilliant light.

No sooner were Caddy and I in the haunted chamber, than a knock came at the door. Who could it be? We thought every body else had retired for the night. The door opened—lo! it was Adela, the daughter of the house, who came to confess that for long she had been devoured by the wish to sleep in that room, and the bed was of

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such enormous dimensions, that she should not inconvenience us, if we would admit her. I, for my part did not like the idea. I felt I was too much acquainted with the exclusive and retiring nature of the brotherhood of ghosts to entertain the faintest hope of a successful apparition to a trio of friends. We conversed, I think, most of the night, which was out of character with the whole proceedings; but as the clock struck the witching hour of midnight, there was a dead silence for a few moments, only broken by Adela's prayer, which her Church enjoins at the striking of each hour: "Lord, make me to love Thee in time and eternity!" an ejaculation that so took my fancy, that ever since that long, long ago I have always repeated those words in the watches of the night, and thereby often scared away many a sad and gloomy thought.

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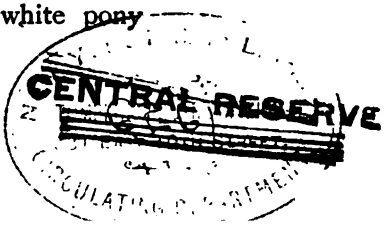
Alas, for the failure, which I had anticipated! Little Lord Thomas Howard disdained to make his appearance, and no one else, on practical joke intent, disturbed the sleepers, or rather watchers. (To be sure we had announced beforehand that the sword of Fergus M'Ivor, which was a relic in the family, was to lie unsheathed by the bedside). This was a great disappointment, and I had to wait for many years afterwards, in another country, and under other circumstances, to behold a ghost.

On leaving Cumberland, we paid a visit of quite another character, namely, to the Master of the Quorn Hounds, whose wife had been a school-fellow and contemporary of my sister. Here, too, we enjoyed ourselves much, being splendidly mounted, a beautiful little snow-white pony



falling to my share. "Billy" was very fast and well trained, and would answer like a dog to his name. It was a great delight to Lord Southampton to gallop on in front for some distance as hard as he could, and then to turn round and call, "Billy, Billy," and off would set the little snowball at furious speed until he rejoined his beloved master. I must here recall an incident which impressed itself deeply on my memory.

There was a large party in the house, chiefly composed of hunting men, and one evening we were playing a round game, and making merry over it, when the conversation turned on Fanny Kemble, who had lately made her *début* in London, and was at the moment the centre of attraction and the theme of conversation.

"What a pity we are not nearer London" (we were in Leicester at the time, and no railroads then, be it remembered), said the lady of the house; "I would give anything in the world to see her. I hear she is perfectly wonderful!" Her sentiments were echoed by many, especially my brother and sister; I listened in breathless awe.

"Well, why should you not go?" said the brother-in-law; "I see no reason against it. There will be no hunting for some days, not a chance—the frost is a great deal too hard; we might go up for a couple of days, sleep at a hotel, writing beforehand for a box."

The idea smiled on our adventurous hostess, some of the company thought the scheme a mad one, and my dear mother tried to argue that it would never do, for if the master of the house, who was absent, came back the next

day, and found his wife and guests flown without a word, he would be much displeased. But imprudence had the upper hand. The brother-in-law rang the bell, ordered a post-chaise and four, went to put on his warm travelling garments, and proceeded then and there on his road to London. The rest of the party were to start early next morning, and they would find relays of posters ordered at all the different stages, so as to avoid delay.

Then came the burning question, Was I to go? No! —for once my mother was inflexible, and I prayed and supplicated in vain. My brother and sister, happy beings! were to be of the party, and poor Mary left crying at home. I really do consider that of all the tributes paid to the talent of my dear friend Fanny Kemble, or rather I should say the combined talents of her and her incomparable father, few could be greater than that midnight conspiracy, and the manner in which it was carried out. Fortune favoured the travellers, for their return preceded that of the master of the house, and my mother was saved the task of mediation, which had been imposed upon her. Indeed I think, on the whole, Lord Southampton rather admired the spirit of adventure which had animated his wife and her guests, for he listened laughingly, and I disconsolately, to the rapturous praises and enthusiastic encomiums bestowed on the young *débutante* by the playgoers.

Although I have already complained of a bad memory for dates, yet there are some which are of sufficient importance to be remembered, such as the accession of William IV. in 1830. The news caused great excitement in

little household, and was indeed calculated in a great measure to change the tenor of our lives. My sister had for a long time been the chosen friend and associate of the Duke of Clarence's beautiful daughters—I mean by Mrs Jordan the celebrated actress—and I must pause in my narrative to give some description of them.

The eldest, Lady de Lisle, had undoubted claims to good looks, but much less so than her sisters. Eliza, Countess of Erroll, was remarkable for her unusual colouring; she had auburn hair, with eyes of hazel brown to match. Augusta Kennedy Erskine, afterwards Lady Frederick Gordon, was a blonde, very graceful in demeanour, and playful in manner. On one occasion when, as a young girl, Augusta came into the room hastily, and made a little curtsey (for curtsies were not then obsolete), my governess, Miss Richardson, told me that she was a perfect likeness of her mother. Lady Mary Fox was more comely than strictly beautiful, but she had a captivating smile, and a voice whose tones were sufficiently musical, I should conjecture, to rival those of Mrs Jordan herself. The youngest was my sister's greatest friend, Amelia, afterwards Lady Falkland, who might have passed for a Spaniard, for her hair was indeed raven black, an epithet so often misapplied; but Amelia's dancing ringlets had a shade over them like the bloom on the feathers of that bird, and her eyes were soft liquid black. I remember seeing her in her wedding-dress (my sister was her bridesmaid), crowned with flowering myrtle, placed there by Queen Adelaide's own hand—the bridal chaplet in Germany. But I have made a long digression, and

must return to the first days of the reign of King William IV.

Amelia Fitzclarence went to the Queen and asked her as a favour to appoint Caroline, or as she was always called, "Caddy" Boyle to be one of her maids of honour, upon which her Majesty replied, with a kiss, that she had already determined on that appointment, and that she had caused Caddy to be informed that she was the first chosen on the list.

It may easily be believed that this appointment occasioned great excitement in our family, and the salary of the maid of honour appeared in my eyes as a sum of fabulous riches, and my sister to have become suddenly a personage of great importance, for she had now a limited "Household" of her own.

About this time my mother hired a small house in Curzon Street, and I began to go out into society in good earnest, which I enjoyed very much, especially the Court balls, which lasted longer, and were, if I may be allowed to say so, in many respects less formal than those of a later period. I was an inveterate dancer, and the interval which elapsed between my stepping out of the carriage, getting off my cloak, and reaching the ball-room, appeared to me interminable.

Respecting the latter part of this year, 1830, the year 1831, and the early portion of 1832, I have nothing very remarkable to record ; our time was chiefly spent between Hampton Court and London, with occasional visits to friends and relations in the country. We suffered great alarm indeed at one time, on account of the serious illness

of my dear father, an incident which I should not mention, seeing his life was mercifully spared, but for one circumstance which made a great impression on my mind. The invalid was attended by two eminent physicians, who left the house, saying it was not in their power to do any more for him, and that there was not the faintest hope of his recovery; yet, by the devoted and affectionate skill of a naval surgeon, Dr Mitchell, who was much attached to him, my father's life was saved, and of the two other doctors, he survived the one eleven, and the other fourteen years. My sister was in constant attendance at Court, yet in the autumn of 1832 she gained leave of absence, and was allowed to accompany her mother on a foreign tour.

CHAPTER XI

FIRST CONTINENTAL TRAVELS—TURIN AND GENOA

IT was on the 11th September, 1832, that, in company with my mother, my sister Caddy, and eldest brother Courtenay, I started for Turin, where Charles had preceded us. It would be difficult to imagine the delightful anticipations I had formed of that journey to the South, and yet, like all earthly pleasures, they had a drawback ; for, on that blissful morning, I shed many tears at parting from my youngest brother Cavendish, as he stood with a great friend of ours at the door of our apartments in Hampton Court Palace to wish us God-speed.

Arrangements had been made that we were to be met at Boulogne by a *voiturier* with a team of horses, which he would attach to our heavy berline, and therein convey us to Turin, *via* the Jura and Switzerland. We found him a rough and ready individual, with a strong will of his own, and a great inclination to overrule the opinions of others, but never forgetting an especial deference *pour cette bonne Miladi.* He was a worthy man, but headstrong by nature, and the only name we ever knew him by was Henri Hutin, which I always believe to have been a *nom de guerre*, or rather *de route.* We had fitted up our carriage very com-

fortably with a small table in the middle, forming a cupboard, which contained materials for tea-making, a luncheon basket, and other luxuries. We had each of us layers of brown holland packets for our own especial books, writing, and drawing materials.

The front box, on which we took it by turns to take an airing and see the country, had also receptacles for different treasures of travel, while the rumble behind was occupied by the faithful Henry. In this manner we proceeded leisurely, but comfortably, on our roads, pausing in the middle of the day to bait our horses and to feed ourselves, and sleeping at little wayside inns of most unpromising exterior, where we were always sure, in passing through France at least, of an appetising supper and snow-white beds. I often wonder if any other girl in the world ever enjoyed herself so much, or revelled so completely in the beauty of the scenery, the novelty of every incident of travel or the delights of the gay and brilliant society with which we mixed in all the principal Italian towns.

We found Charles happily established in the post of *attaché* at the English Legation, with his friends Sir Augustus and Lady Albinia Foster, who treated him with all the kindness and consideration which they bestowed on their own sons. After spending what our American friends call "a good time," at Turin, we went to Genoa, that proud and beautiful city, where we remained until the following summer. We became acquainted with all the leading members of society, the names of most of whom recall many an interesting page in the annals of Genoese history, such as Pallavicini, Durazzo, Balbi, Doria, and the

like; but the family with whom we were most intimate, and on whose memory I dwell with most affection, was that of the Marchesa Brignole, her sister and her two daughters, with the latter of whom I had constant intercourse. The eldest was married, and at the house of Madame Ferrai (the late Marchesa Galliera) we used to spend the most delightful evenings; it was here also I became acquainted with Lord and Lady Holland,[1] then newly married, both of whom were most agreeable companions.

Genoa does not afford much scope or variety for those who love riding, but where there was a horse, and a side-saddle to put on it, my sister and I could not be kept from mounting, and by degrees most of the Genoese gentlemen whom we met in society joined our riding parties, until our cavalcade lengthened out to enormous proportions, and many were the pleasant gallops we had along the coast. Alas! that most of those gay cavaliers have long since been numbered with the dead. One in particular I recall with sincere affection. He was the Chevalier Pietro de Boyl, brother of the Marchese of the same name. He was a Sardinian by birth, and at this time a Captain in the Engineers. He was remarkable for his extreme beauty and high courage, which he proved afterwards by distinguishing himself greatly as A.D.C. to King Charles Albert in several battles. He was subsequently Governor of his native island of Sardinia, but, at the time of which I am speaking, he was merely a young officer, one of my favourite partners, and a constant visitor at our house. He

[1] Henry Edward, fourth Baron Holland; married, 9th May 1833, Lady Mary Coventry.

sang well to the guitar, and his other charms were enhanced in my eyes by his devotion to *cara miladi*, as he always called my dear mother.

It was during our sojourn at Genoa that King William IV. bestowed on my father the Guelphic and Hanoverian Order, which his Majesty was very fond of dispensing. When the news of the decoration reached Genoa, we received visits of congratulation from all our friends, and at the same time letters and notes offering sympathy to my mother upon what was considered a very questionable elevation.

How grieved I was when the time came to leave beautiful Genoa! The Carnival had been so enjoyable, the fun so "fast and furious," and the opera season so delightful. We had been almost every night to the theatre, having a box placed at our disposal by one or other of our Genoese friends. Visits were paid from one box to another by all the gentlemen of our acquaintance, and the society thus enjoyed was on an easy and agreeable footing. The *prima donna* at the time I am speaking of was, strange as it may appear, a German by birth, and Madame Ungher was, in my opinion, the finest actress I have ever seen, scarcely excepting Rachel or Ristori. She was not remarkable for beauty, but had a noble presence, was graceful in her movements, and her singing was replete with expression, dignity and pathos. In the opera of the *Pirata*, I shall never forget the scene in which she implores her child to intercede with his father in her behalf. I was forcibly reminded of this incident the other day, in witnessing Miss Mary Anderson's beautiful impersonation

of Hermione in the *Winter's Tale*, and the touching dialogue between her and the little Prince, when she showed the same tenderness, the same winning grace, but enhanced by an extreme loveliness with which Madame Ungher was not endowed.

At that period *ballets d'action* were in great repute. They generally occurred between the middle acts of the opera and were, as I considered, an unreasonable interruption, in every sense of the word. Besides, I wearied of the constant repetition of the same insipid pantomime; and the invariable story of the "Two Rivals" was commonplace in the highest degree.

One evening I turned to a gentleman who sat beside me, and expressed my impatience, finding fault in rather an irritable tone with the *prima ballerina* for killing herself, and, "Why does she not rather kill her rival?" I asked of him.

My companion was a matter-of-fact personage, and after gazing at me for some time with an expression of disapprobation: "Comment, Mademoiselle," he exclaimed, "sous une chevelure ainsi blonde vous cachez des passions ainsi violentes?" I have often thought that we blondes labour under a great responsibility, as we are generally supposed (in fiction at least) to be mild and virtuous, calm and placable.

I can recall most vividly an amusing evening spent at the Veglione. My eldest brother tried to persuade us to go to the masquerade that night, but we (my mother, my sister and myself) were very deceitful, complained of sleepiness and disinclination for the task to which he was looking forward. In the meantime we had surreptitiously

made assignations with three of our friends to meet us at the door of the theatre and be our escort for the night. Our hotel was situated on the port, and we had, therefore, to pass through several of the narrow streets *en route* for San Carlo, which could only be traversed by sedan chairs.

During the many years I have passed in Italy, I have never seen above three instances of drunkenness in the streets, but this evening I was unfortunate. My chair swayed about from side to side, as if I were in a steamboat, and at last came to a dead stop, and our faithful servant Henry, who was walking by my side, lifting up the top and opening the door, informed me of the reason, while turning to the chairmen he heaped upon them in his very best Italian a storm of indignant invectives, at the same time sending back the more sober of the two to the hotel, to summon another pair of bearers. Issuing from the sedan, in all the splendour and magnificence of a Turkish Sultana with an entire mask, I began to add my indignant rebukes to those of Henry, when the ludicrousness of the position came home so forcibly to me that I stopped in my harangue. Glittering with gold and silver and false jewels, and of the commanding stature of five foot nothing, I must have greatly impressed those guilty men. Remembering, however, that my "paper face," as the Italians call an entire mask, was expressive of inane good-humour and the blandest of smiles, I came down from my pinnacle of sublime virtue, and retreated into my chair until the appearance of my new bearers. Arrived at the theatre, and joined by our cavaliers, we mixed in the motley throng on mischief bent.

My companion, being one of the leaders of society, who knew all about everybody and everything in that society, was of the greatest use in prompting my sallies and in enlightening me when I was at a loss.

"Do you see," I said, "that officer who is following us, and who looks at me every now and then in the most threatening manner? I do not know him, and he evidently takes me for sombody else."

"Yes," replied Count Camille, "I think I can explain it? He is very much attached to a French lady, who is about your size, and I think he has mistaken you for her. She is a clever little women and writes poetry."

On this hint, I spake. With a rashness which perhaps I should have feared to exercise after a longer acquaintance with Italy and the Italians, I determined to tease my follower. I had resolved from the beginning to speak only Italian, or very broken English, so as not to be found out as a foreigner in too many languages, so I began to expostulate with my officer on his dogging my steps. I made Camille, who was very tall, bend down earnestly and talk to me in a whisper, about nothing or anything. I told my pursuer that I had been too busy to think of him lately, as I had been occupied writing sonnets to the moon, with other wise speeches of an exasperating quality. I then told him I was going to valse, and should not be able to do so if he stuck so close to me. I think I was rather courageous to bear the brunt of the furious looks he cast upon me. He still followed, and after two rounds I came back to the place where he was standing, upbraided him for his jealousy, and raising my mask for a moment

relieved him from all his suspicions by showing the face of an utter stranger. He was not what would be called a handsome man, but it required a southern face and a southern nature to express the delight and relief that he experienced at that moment. His bad quarter of an hour was over, and he was good-humoured enough to enter into the fun and mischief of the mask who had deceived him; his eyes literally beamed with pleasure, and with an arch smile and a low bow he hoped, in the charming Italian form of speech, that we should soon meet again.

I next attacked a Marchese of our acquaintance, who was very ill of Anglomania, and extremely proud of speaking the language, which he did very well for a Genoese, for they are not remarkable for being good linguists. To him I spoke in English, and excited as much jealousy in his breast, though of a different nature, as I had already done in that of my officer. I was careful to break my English and to translate from Italian idioms. When asked where I lived and whence I came, I told him that I resided somewhere between the Acqua Sola (the promenade on the north side of the city) and the Lantern, meaning the Lanterna or lighthouse. He then asked me if I had ever been in England, and I told him that I had spent six months in that country. Beckoning to a member of the American Legation, he whispered to him that he should engage in conversation with me, and I had the satisfaction of hearing the referee inform him that I certainly was no Englishwoman.

So far my efforts had been successful at puzzling and misleading, but a higher triumph was in store for me. I

sought out my brother, chaffed him mercilessly about his flirtations, his favourite partners and the like, paid especial court to him, flattered him in the way I knew would most please him, and made a resistless attack on his vanity! I asked him to take one *tour de valse* with me, and finally ended by presenting him with a large bunch of violets. It is always said that the best way to detect a mask is to examine the hands and feet, but here I was a match for my brother. With an entire disregard of vanity I had encased my hands in ill-fitting gloves, and over my usual evening shoes had drawn a pair of Turkish slippers. I joined my mother and my sister, and we all three went home to the hotel, and were sound asleep before the return of my brother. The next morning I went into his room before he was up, and in the most innocent manner asked him to tell me all about the *bal masqué*, whether it was amusing, whether he advised us to go next time, whom he had seen and recognised, etc. Then, turning round and seeing my violets carefully placed in water by his bed-side, I pounced upon them, saying, "How deliciously sweet! where did you get them?"

"Pray leave my violets alone," he said in a sharper tone than usual; "I've a particular reason for not wishing to part with them"; and this was uttered mysteriously, mingled with a certain degree of self-complacency which made me quite dread the inevitable moment when I must confess to poor Courtenay that those violets were the gift of his sister! What a terrible anti-climax to the romantic episode of the foregoing evening, as he had evidently believed the donor to be one of the beautiful Genoese

ladies who were the brilliant ornaments of that brilliant society.

There is a proverb connected with the proud city, that "Its sea has no fish and its fair citizens no souls." To this I demur, and at all events there were few towns, even in Italy, where the women of the three different classes were more beautiful. In Rome, for instance, the aristocracy, with some splendid exceptions, were not famous for their personal charms, but the lower orders, especially the Trasteverini (or the inhabitants from the other side of the Tiber), were for the most part magnificent specimens of womanhood, tall, fully developed, majestic in their bearing, with not infrequently a defiant expression. My sweeping description of the Romans of the lower orders used to be, that all the women looked as if they would stab you if they could, and all the men did.

The fashion of veils and chintz head-dresses in Genoa was going out as early as 1833, but a few years before, the noble ladies were distinguished by wearing lace veils, similar to the mantilla of the Spaniards, but chiefly white; the burghers' wives, white muslin; while the lower classes, whether country or townswomen, wore on their heads the chintz covering, which is now almost obsolete, even in Genoa, but has of late years been copied in the Manchester manufactories, and sold for bed-quilts in many of our London shops.

The year of which I am speaking was very eventful, and great political excitement was felt throughout all Italy, especially in the north. Mazzini was at work and had made his influence widely felt, while that true

patriot, Camille de Cavour, preached the doctrines of real reform, and was preparing the way for better days in the land he loved so well. Intrigues of all kinds were being carried on, of a complicated character; frequent arrests were made, and spies were in every house, reporting the conversations that took place at private dinner-tables. I believe there is little doubt that our head-waiter, old Pietro, was one of the most officious of these eavesdroppers. I heard it afterwards with regret, for he was a favourite of mine, and often joined in an easy and pleasant manner in our conversation. On one occasion I was quoting a short poem of Metastasio's that I admired greatly, and I had got as far as

"Cosi non torna fido, Quell' angioletto al nido . '

and there I stuck fast, when Pietro, stepping lightly forward, came to my rescue, and, in a sonorous and theatrical voice, exclaimed:

"La pargoletta prole, al cibo a ravvivai."

Picture to yourself a waiter at a London hotel volunteering to finish for you the last lines of a sonnet by Milton, or of a speech by Shakespeare!

The history of that time will be found recorded in the story called "Lorenzo Benoni," by Ruffini,[1] the author of that most charming little book "Doctor Antonio," a wonderful literary triumph, when you remember that the two volumes were written in English by an Italian.

But now the time came for our departure, and how

[1] Giovanni Ruffini, an Anglo-Italian writer of novels and sketches, who lived from 1807 to 1881.

deeply grieved I was to bid adieu to Genoa and the Genoese. My brother and sister went to England to attend their duties at Court, as they were both in the Household, and my mother and I set out for the baths of Lucca, where we had been advised to spend the summer. We took up our abode in a nice little house at the Bagni della Villa, being shortly after rejoined by my brother Courtenay.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMER AT THE BATHS OF LUCCA

WE were all delighted with the Baths at Lucca, and the picturesque environs. The surrounding hills were covered with Spanish chestnut trees, which retained their fresh spring green during the whole of the summer, and the cool, refreshing river Lima, which runs through the valley, tempered and mitigated the heat of those months, that to some of our compatriots appeared excessive. My brother and I hired ponies, and in the company of two Englishmen, his friends, we rode every day, making excursions into all the beautiful little towns which crowned the neighbouring mountains, a pleasure which was heightened by the fact that our dear mother was sometimes able to join us in these pilgrimages, being carried in a chair by the sure-footed peasants of the country, who made no difficulty in ascending the hill-sides, however steep.

As the spring came on, the wild flowers were a constant source of delight to us, although our botany was of no scientific nature. There is a thistle there which grew by the roadside and in the fields, that I have never seen elsewhere, though perhaps I prove my ignorance in thinking it to be a rare specimen; in shape it resembles a small

sunflower, but the centre is violet, and the small and numerous petals shine like mother-of-pearl or glistening opal. I was very fond of wearing it in my hair, in those days when it was the fashion to dress the head with natural flowers, in a country where even men, especially fishermen, were frequently seen with a rose, a carnation, or some sweet flower fixed behind one ear.

One day as we were riding along, about five miles from the Baths, my brother and I were surprised at being accosted by a peasant in very good English. We slackened our pace and entered into conversation with him, enquiring how it was that he spoke our language so well. He told us that he had been many years in England, carrying about a tray of plaster-casts on his head through the streets. This is a custom which has become less frequent, but when I was a child, nothing tempted my scanty store of pocket-money more than one of what I called those "white images," and I well remember the delight I felt in the possession of a young Apollo. When I saw the original in after years I hailed it as an old acquaintance. The man told us that most of the people in that line of trade came from the village through which we were at that moment riding, and that those who were successful in their business usually returned to end their days, small blame to them, in their beautiful country.

We occupied the ground floor in our house at the Villa, while the *primo piano* was inhabited by an English family, consisting of a middle-aged lady, a gentleman, and two daughters. My mother, as a rule, kept aloof from the com-

panionship of her compatriots while on the continent, unless they were old friends, and preferred the society of the natives; but I had a secret hankering after the acquaintance of the English girls above us. The eldest in particular took my fancy; she was tall and well formed, with a profusion of dark brown hair, and although her face could not be called beautiful, it was wonderfully expressive. I had heard of her proficiency in drawing, and had often passed her as she sat sketching under her large umbrella, and I knew she was a charming musician, for I could hear her beautiful touch on the pianoforte, and her melodious singing in many languages, as clearly as if we had been in the same room; but time wore on, and we did not become acquainted.

One day I was busy reading in our little sitting-room when I heard the most piercing shrieks, accompanied with a stamping of feet and other signs of distress. Without a moment's hesitation, I flung down my book and, heedless of *les convenances*, rushed upstairs, and dashed into the room, where I found the two girls ministering to their mother's maid, who for some unreasonable reason or other had gone off into violent hysterics. That was the strange fashion in which we made the acquaintance of the excellent Boddingtons, whose companionship and friendship cheered many years of the lives of both generations. From that moment the two mothers became inseparable, and both the girls endeared themselves to my heart, so much so that the elder and I were subsequently known amongst our friends at Rome and Florence as "Rosalind and Celia."

While we were at the baths of Lucca, a ball was given

by the couriers and upper servants of the families passing the summer there, which was to take place in the little theatre where dramatic performances were occasionally given. To this ball the "quality" were bidden, and places assigned to them in the boxes, while the pit and stage were boarded over for the dancers.

We spent a most amusing evening in watching the arrival of the guests, who were received at the entrance by the stewards, according to the rank of their masters and mistresses. Thus the lady's maid to the Duchess of Lucca was received with royal honours, everybody curtseying and bowing as she passed along, and great clapping of hands as she made her way to the principal seat. I cannot say her temporary Highness looked very royal, or her toilette very well chosen, but she was determined, as it appeared to me, to do honour to her high position by putting on a small portion of every "chiffon" she possessed. Her gown was of as many colours as Joseph's coat. Filigree trinkets from Genoa, and, I should imagine, from several *bijoutiers en faux* in the Palais Royal adorned her neck, ears, and hands, while on her head she wore flowers, feathers, and more false hair than was then consistent with the fashion even of that day. Her airs and graces were in keeping with her attire, and I could not help contrasting her whole appearance with that of her Royal mistress.

It was easy to detect the nationality of the different households: the severe simplicity of the English, the light and airy ball-dresses of the French, and the different modes of dancing which characterised the different countries. The

little flirtations that passed, the extreme *galanterie* of the men, especially the couriers, the awkward "footing it" of some, and the very graceful dancing of others, were all most amusing to witness. It was *High Life Below Stairs* acted on a real stage by real characters, and far less exaggerated than the famous droll old farce.

During our sojourn at the Baths we made a delightful excursion to the town of Lucca, and here we became acquainted with the reigning Duke and Duchess. They were reckoned the handsomest couple in Europe. The Duchess was a daughter of the King of Sardinia, and as good as she was beautiful; the description of her would pass for that of many an Italian beauty, but I have seldom seen her equal. She was tall and majestic, with a noble presence and lustrous eyes, but she had the saddest expression I almost ever beheld, and so I observed to one of her ladies, who became a great friend of mine, and she told me that it was not without cause. Almost the same description might be given of the Duke's personal appearance, with the exception of the sad expression, for there was no melancholy in the beaming, smiling countenance of Charles de Bourbon. He had a sweet voice and a winning tongue, was a graceful dancer, and the admired of all who saw him; but he was unworthy the love of so noble a woman, and was vain and inconstant by nature. It was told of him that one day a friend presumed to ask him how it was possible he could treat his beautiful wife with so little consideration.

"Tiens, tiens," he said, "elle est très bonne, elle est très belle, mais elle ne me contrarie jamais. C'est si fade."

I mention this circumstance as a warning to wives who are too forgiving and forbearing.

About this time there took place a great religious festival in Lucca. According to a legend, one day in far distant times a ship came to—I forget what part of the coast, or what harbour—bearing a sacred image of our Lord, which was at once appropriated by the Luccees.[1] As far as I can remember, it was a rough, ill-modelled effigy, with a black face, but it was held in high veneration by the citizens, and on one night in every year it was carried through the town in a long procession, consisting of the Court, the nobles, the Guilds, and principal burghers of the place. I can recall the scene as the moonlight streamed down on the Duke and Duchess and their attendants, the Duke in full uniform, the Duchess a perfect dream of beauty in soft pale blue, crowned with a heavy tiara of diamonds, and with diamonds studding her whole dress, and glittering and sparkling in the moonlight with a softer brilliancy than can ever be seen in the interior of a room. The ladies and gentlemen of the retinue alike in full dress, and the priests bearing candles and chanting as they went, made a sight never to be forgotten.

One morning, after a ball at the ducal palace, the lady in waiting, to whom I have already referred, told me that the Duchess was suffering from a violent headache, arising

[1] According to the tradition, the Volto Santo was carried by Nicodemus, who, after the Crucifixion, was bidden by an angel to make an image of our Lord; but leaving it unfinished, he found the Face had been miraculously completed. It is said to have found its way to the coast of Italy in an open boat, and to have been brought to Lucca in 782.

from the weight of the diadem, which she had not worn for some time. This struck me as a symbol, and the next morning I wrote the following lines, which I gave to the Marchesa:—

"Once more, oh joy! once more alone,
The pageant's at an end
And all the crowded train are gone,
The courtier, flatterer, friend.
All, all is hushed and silent now,
I tear the diadem from my brow,
Each glittering fillet rend.
Oh would I thus my heart could free,
And lift its load of misery!

"I am alone, oh joy untold!
My splendid task is o'er,
My heart of griefs I may unfold,
And swell the grievous store.
I need not face the hollow smile,
With a weeping bosom all the while,
My tears may freely pour.
I need not speak of trival things,
When every word fresh torture brings.

"Oh, well can I recall the day
I left my mother's care,
When, decked in royal bride array,
Each voice proclaimed me fair.
That morn I drank in hope's bright dream,
The fount of joy and nectar's stream,
And breathed a magic air.
The sun, the sky, the earth, the sea,
That day had new-born charms for me.

"A ducal crown was not the thought
That fired my soul with pride,
Sardinia's daughter might be sought
For many a throne beside.

But rapture's cup was flowing o'er,
The morn I left Liguria's shore,
As Charles de Bourbon's bride.
Sole Empress of his heart of bliss—
What were my sister's realms to this?

"They call me haughty, proud, and cold,
But little do they know——
Who can through Hecla's snows behold
The flames that lurk below?
O Charles, my sovereign, husband, guide
My heart's best, earliest, dearest pride,
Yet source of all my pain,
Give me the love of bygone years,
To turn the current of my tears
In smiles of hope again."

The Marchesa read the lines with tears, and said how much she wished she could show them to her royal mistress; but, alas! in some cases, sympathy is an insult.

Before taking leave of the Baths of Lucca altogether, I think I may as well allude here to a second visit which we paid some years later to this charming spot, when we found the only son of the Duke and Duchess established at the Royal Villa, and were invited, shortly after our arrival, to a ball which they gave.

The Prince had married the only sister of the Comte de Chambord. She was a pretty blonde, fair of complexion, and short of stature, with golden hair and blue eyes *à fleur de tête*. Her manners were winning and gracious, and she altogether formed a striking contrast to her husband, who was vulgar and unrefined. Indeed, in a subsequent visit to England, he gained for himself the name of "Filthy Lucre."

One of his gentlemen told me that the greatest ambition of His Highness was to be taken for an English groom, upon which I retorted that in that case, he must contrive to have a better seat on horseback. But to return to the ball.

I remember both my mother and myself being extremely scandalised by the fact of His Highness holding, what some of the gentlemen called, *un estaminet*, next door to the ball-room, where, during the greater part of the evening, he and his chosen friends smoked very bad tobacco. This incident will not surprise the readers of the present day; the only difference lies in the better quality of the tobacco, for what was then considered an innovation in the manners and customs of society, is now sanctioned by the highest authority.

The career of this ill-fated Prince was a miserable one. On the death of Maria Louisa, the Duchy of Lucca became annexed to that of Tuscany, while that of Parma fell to the share of Charles de Bourbon, Duke of Lucca. He disliked the change, retired into private life, and abdicated in favour of his son, who assumed the title of Charles III.

Now began a reign of misrule and anarchy; the new sovereign was hated by his subjects, as was his Prime Minister, Baron Ward. This man, who was a Yorkshire jockey, first entered the Duke's service as groom, and by degrees became his political adviser, confidant, and companion. After a short and disastrous reign, Charles III. was assassinated in the open street, and as some say, in a common tavern, by the hand of a man of the

lower orders, prompted, it was supposed, by hatred and jealousy.

The incidents connected with this event were kept as secret as possible. It took place in the year 1854, when the Duchess became regent for her infant son, and these chronicles belong to the time when Italy was not united.

CHAPTER XIII

SHORT SOJOURN IN FLORENCE

FROM the baths of Lucca we went by *vetturino*, a charming drive, to Florence. The chief part of the way I travelled with my eldest brother on the box of our large berline, enjoying thus a perfect view of the country through which we passed.

A trifling incident occasioned us much merriment the day we passed the frontier of the little Duchy and entered that of Tuscany. Underneath the carriage was slung a hamper, in which nestled our favourite Scotch terrier, "Boch-Dhu," so named on account of her black muzzle, together with a small family with which she had lately increased our caravan. My brother had walked on for a stretch, as he often did, and left me in possession of some money to be delicately handed to the custom-house officer, bidding me at the same time to address the official with great civility. Accordingly, when we arrived at the Dogana, out came a little bustling man, whose chief characteristic was a pair of enormous moustaches. I acted up to my orders, and slid the *buona mano* in his hand. He did not disdain the bribe, but thought to hedge with his conscience by asking in rather a peremptory tone

of voice what that curious-looking basket contained, implying that it was his painful duty to be informed on so important a matter. I could not resist the temptation of playing him a little practical joke, so in a meek and obsequious manner I replied that I was not quite sure if the contents were contraband, and requested him to satisfy his scruples by lifting the lid. As he did so my expectations were realised, for the infuriated mother made a dart at his nose, and he incontinently dropped the lid with all haste. I must do the functionary the justice of saying that he was good-humoured enough to bear me no malice. He laughed outright, and the carriage drove on while he was shaking his fist at me in mock anger.

On our arrival in Florence we took up our abode on what I have since called the wrong side of the Arno, although the autumn was not sufficiently advanced for us to find our quarters too cold. The house was situated near the south end of one of the bridges, and we had for fellow-lodgers a French family, consisting of a mother, two daughters and a son, who became ere long our cherished friends and companions.

The youngest daughter was a most remarkable person, and one who was well known in Florence for many years. She had lived a life of romantic adventure, and it was my hope and intention, at one time, to have written a slight sketch of her life, as she described it to me.

The mother, Madame de Fauveau, was a typical Frenchwoman of the *ancien régime*, whose family had suffered during the Reign of Terror. Her own mother had been a prisoner for some time in the "*Conciergerie*,"

and I was much interested by an incident which my friend related to me of those terrible days.

It seems that the room which Madame de Fauveau's mother shared with several other lady prisoners had but one window, heavily barred, through which you could see, only by climbing up on a ledge, and straining your neck to look out; but here so slight a communication with the outer world was eagerly sought after by the poor captives, who would daily take it in turn to mount the window-seat. One day it was the turn of Madame de Fauveau's mother, and her attention was attracted by seeing an old woman in the street make her all sorts of mysterious signs; it was evident she had something of importance to impart. She first made manifold gestures and gesticulations, then taking up her own gown in her hands, and shaking it and pointing to it several times, she proceeded to pick up a stone from the ground, deliberately drew her hand across her throat, and bowed her head, as if to designate the guillotine. Can you not believe with what alacrity the happy prisoner jumped down from the window, and communicated the joyful news to her fellow-captives, in a cautious whisper, however, "Robespierre est mort!" which meant for all in that room life and freedom?

Madame de Fauveau was a witty, kind-hearted woman, and a hero-worshipper, and the hero, or rather heroine, she worshipped was her own daugher, Félicie, who was well worthy of all the incense offered her.

Félicie, some years before I knew her, had attached herself to the fortunes of the Duchesse de Berri, and had been the fast friend and comrade-in-arms of the brave

and noble Madame de la Roche-Jacquelin, Princesse de Talmont. This lady had emulated the example of her ancestor, in the first rising of la Vendée, by animating her retainers, and raising, as far as I remember, a regiment, which she herself commanded, to uphold the fortunes of their legitimate King, Henri V., in the same locality, so much so that, with a similarity of name and country, the heroines of the two risings have frequently been confounded, and the dates and heroines confused.

As I only heard the account of this short campaign from Félicie herself, my allusion to it is naturally vague, but I know that those two friends endured great hardships and dangers in each other's company, and when the little band of loyalists was dispersed, and the cause lost, they wandered about, suffering from hunger and fatigue, often hiding themselves in dry ditches by day, and continuing their flight by night, till at length they were compelled to separate for a better chance of safety. Félicie was taken, and the tattered colours of the Vendéens found under her uniform. She was imprisoned, her captors believing that they had arrested Madame de la Roche-Jacquelin, an error which the faithful friend did not contradict.

On coming out from captivity, Félicie was banished rom France, together with her mother and the whole family. The little fortune they possessed was confiscated, and thus it came about that they settled in Florence.

What was to be done to gain a livelihood, for the de Fauveaus were too proud to accept pecuniary aid from people whose political sentiments they did not share? Félicie was energetic. She became a sculptress, she worked

in marble, in alabaster, and in silver, in many branches, brooches, clasps, and wings, which would have done no discredit to Benvenuto Cellini. All her tastes, all her talent turned to the expounding of the genius of the Middle Ages, and all her works breathed the spirit of mediæval art. One of her chief productions was a group of Francesca di Rimini, chosen at the moment when Paolo falls at her feet, and the fatal book lies on her lap—

"Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante."

Another very beautiful statuette she executed for the Duchesse de Berri; it represented St Elizabeth, at the moment when, upbraided by her husband for carrying provisions to the poor in time of scarcity, she draws aside the cloth which covers her basket, and lo! a miracle, the contents were turned to flowers. I saw this beautiful little statue in the Duchesse de Berri's palace at Venice, holding fresh white roses, the emblem at once of the Royal Saint and the badge of the Royal owner.

Félicie de Fauveau was an excellent scholar as far as reading went, being well acquainted with our literature, but she never could master the language sufficiently to talk in society, and it was amusing to hear the dialogues between her and my mother, each in her native tongue.

Our stay at Florence was not long. We made a preliminary acquaintance with all the treasures of painting and sculpture contained in that beautiful city, and went on our road to Rome, sleeping one night in the Pontine Marshes, when we had for supper a *fricassée* of frogs such as I had heard of all my life and never beheld before or since.

We had had apartments taken for us in the Via della Croce leading out of the Via Babuino, where on our arrival my mother found a letter from her old friend Madame de Bunsen, begging her to come to tea that very evening at the Prussian Legation, situated on the Campidoglio or Capitoline Hill. Accordingly, having divested ourselves of our dusty garments, we proceeded thither in all haste. That was a red-letter day in my calendar, and one that while my life lasts can never be forgotten.

Our repast over, Madame de Bunsen said: "It is a most beautiful night, and I think you and your girl would like to take your first impression of Rome from the window of our balcony."

So saying she led us out, and lo! in all the silver radiance of a southern moonlight, Rome lay sleeping before us—Rome with its classical ruins, the Coliseum, the Forums of Campo Vaccino and that of Trajan, the Tarpeian Rock, with gorgeous palaces of the Middle Ages, and the towers of manifold periods, while St Peter's and the Vatican, with the Castle of St Angelo, were visible on the further bank of the yellow Tiber, now, glittering in the moonlight, transmuted into silver; and that was our first sight of Rome the eternal, Rome the beautiful, Rome the sublime—the pilgrims to whose shrine never failed to drink of the magic waters of the fountain of Trevi, in the fond hope that this charm will insure their return.

I shall say very little about my Roman experiences on this occasion, as, making allowances for the different degrees of enthusiasm, the same story would be more or less told by every traveller; suffice it to say, that my cup

of happiness seemed overflowing, when I drove with my mother, and walked or rode in the Campagna with my brother and numerous friends, when each day our eyes were gladdened, and our intellects brightened, by some new revelation of beauty in art or nature.

Very shortly after our arrival we went with a large party to see the principal statues in the Vatican by torch-light, an expensive amusement which is generally accomplished by collecting many friends together, each of whom pays a torch-bearer. The effect is most wonderful, for the men who carry the torches are instructed to make the light travel over the marble features until they assume a living aspect, with all the change and expression of breathing humanity.

We mixed frequently this winter in artistic circles, visiting both at the homes and studios of the principal painters and sculptors of the day. To Horace Vernet, in particular, we often paid our respects; at his house one of the most prominent and interesting figures was the venerable Thorwaldsen, whose magnificent work of our Lord and the Twelve Apostles was then on exhibition in his studio, the same which now forms one of the glories of his native city of Copenhagen. He himself was of a commanding presence, with long locks of silver lying on his shoulders, and of the gentlest and most genial countenance I ever beheld.

One evening the French painter invited his guests to come in costume, and I remember the characteristic appearance which he made as a Bedouin, and very like one of his own equestrian pictures, while his lovely daughter,

in a splendid dress of gold and coloured brocade, looked as if she had walked out of a Paul Veronese frame. I thought then of the verse in the Psalms of the description of the King's daughter—"All glorious within, her clothing of wrought gold, brought unto the King in raiment of needlework." She was indeed, on that evening especially, a vision of delight. No wonder she drove poor Leopold Robert to madness, and captivated the heart of her noble countryman, Paul de la Roche.

With Overbeck we also made acquaintance, and the fine work on which he was then engaged, the "Life of Our Lord," with regard to which he told us that he had changed the Protestant religion for that of Rome, as he believed none but a Catholic could paint sacred subjects.

Pinelli was also still alive, and we found him at work on one of those terra-cotta groups of Roman peasantry, which were even more admirable than his drawings. He was very handsome, a typical Roman, with gold earrings in his ears, and his hair in small ringlets, such as in old days might commonly be seen among our English sailors. I think he admired himself as much as we did, and it was easy to see that he had taken himself as the model for most of the principal figures in his charming groups.

Another interesting personage was the German painter Reinhardt, a man of very advanced age, who was called at that time the father of the artists.

But this book is not intended as a mere catalogue.

Through the kindness of a friend whose acquaintance we made at Lucca, we had ingress afforded us to many of the religious ceremonies in the Sistine and elsewhere, from

which the generality of travellers were usually excluded, and letters of introduction also formed passports to the palaces of the chief Roman nobility, so that the Carnival that year was one continued round of gaiety and festivity for me and mine.

After some delightful Spring days passed in the neighbourhood with the Boddingtons, at Tivoli and Albano, we travelled to Naples, where those dear friends soon rejoined us. Here we took up our abode, in a very pretty apartment on the ground floor of the Palazzo Calabritti, just opposite the entrance to the delightful gardens of the Villa Reale.

CHAPTER XIV

SUMMER AT NAPLES

WE made rather a sad entrance into our new abode, for we had not been settled above two days when the portress appeared to me with a very troubled face, and asked me to come and see her Giulia, who, she feared, was dying. The poor woman was in dreadful grief, having lost another daughter not many months before. I accompanied her to the sick room, where I found a very pretty girl, by whose bedside I took my place. With that trustfulness which is a leading characteristic in young Italians, she took my hand, and addressed me as if I had been an old friend. I tried to speak cheerfully to her, but there was something so spiritual and far away in the look of her pleading eyes that it failed me to hold out to her any hope of recovery.

She had only lately fallen ill, she told me, but knew that she was dying, for her sister's last words to her were "Tornero per te." [1] She scarcely knew at the time what was meant by these ominous words.

"But two nights ago, signorina," she said, "I looked up and saw Anna by my bedside; she had fulfilled her promise and came back for me."

[1] "I will return for thee."

Poor Giulia! I only saw her once again, and that was on the morrow, when she was carried past our windows on the way to the Campo Santo. According to the custom of those days (I do not know if it still continues), she lay with her face exposed on a bier of magnificent crimson velvet, embroidered with gold, attended by a long procession of priests and mourners for the dead. Her beautiful long hair crowned with fresh roses, her gala dress thrown loosely over her, to be removed when the funeral reached the cemetery, and the fair young creature to be thrown headlong into one of those noisome holes which were opened daily for the interment of the dead.

With the exception of two attacks of illness which befell me and my sister, and which were productive of a good result in the friendship we formed with the chief physician of the place, our summer at Naples was most enjoyable. As usual, we had our cavalcades, in which we were always joined by the two Boddington sisters and a compatriot of ours, Hugh Cholmondeley, afterwards Lord Delamere; so that with my two brothers, my sister and myself we formed no insignificant troop of horses. But summer was at its height, and our rides were nocturnal. The horses were ordered at 10 P.M., and we rode till one and two in the morning, for, as I heard a passer-by once say under my window:—

"A Napoli non e mai notte."

How beautiful were those moonlight rides along the coast towards Posillippo, with the Mediterranean glittering and sparkling, and occasionally dotted by fishing-boats,

with their flickering lights, while Vesuvius at intervals threw up volleys of flame and columns of smoke.

What a happy band we were!—alas! there are but two survivors! What delightful excursions we had (the pleasure enhanced by the presence of our respective parents) to Pompeii, to Sorrento and Amalfi and Paestum, and what delicious evenings we spent in the little garden of Villa Craven which overhung the sea! What a trip to the island of Ischia, where the Boddingtons and I danced tarantellas on the terrace of the pretty inn under the tuition of a dark-eyed young Ischiate. How enchanting was the scenery of that sweet little island, the pleasure only marred to our friends' English maid by the fact that we had to cross the sea to get there.

Harvey (for that was her name), the hysterical friend of Lucca days, expostulated with her mistress on the inconvenience of coming in an open boat—

"Lord and Lady Sydney, ma'm," she said, "preferred coming by land, and found it much more comfortable."

Poor Harvey! she was one of those people who remain faithful to their first idea. It was in vain her young ladies explained to her that it was very difficult, they might say impossible, to reach an island by land! Harvey maintained stoutly that Lord and Lady Sydney had achieved this feat, for she had it from the best authority, that of the lady's maid; and in that belief Harvey went down to her grave.

Vesuvius vouchsafed three separate eruptions to us during our sojourn at Naples, and we made a pilgrimage up the mountain while the fire-stones were falling and the

lava flowing in all directions, much to the consternation and disgust of our guides.

But to return from Nature to human nature, and to speak first of our beloved physician.

Michael Giardano was the son of an Italian by an English woman, and combined in his own person the best characteristics of both nations. He was eminently handsome, well skilled in his profession, a scholar, a sportsman, and an artist. He nursed me and my sister, and our faithful Henry, through bad attacks of fever, and as far as I was concerned, assisted in my recovery by the opiates he administered in the form of long recitals from favourite passages in Dante as he sat by my bedside.

Poetry is a medicine which I have always found efficacious in my own case, either to a body or mind diseased, and I was reminded of my Neapolitan friend not long ago, when another distinguished member of the same profession, and another valued friend of my own, administered the same remedy, only then the tonic was Goethe instead of Dante.

Giardano was a favourite with man, woman, child, and dog, for he set the paw of our Scotch terrier when run over by the carriage. "Boch-Dhu" was very much pleased with the care he bestowed on her, and, I grieve to say, showed some dissimulation in order to attract his notice. Long after she had become sound, the instant the door opened, and the Doctor appeared, this deceitful individual would limp to the chair and, sitting beside her medical attendant, offer him her paw!

Poor Michael Giardano! Many years afterwards I

picked some violets from his grave in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, where an elaborate tomb had been erected to his memory by an English lady, who became his wife, not long after we had bidden him adieu at Naples. There could be no doubt of the admiration and affection in which she held this gifted man, whose epitaph she wrote, detailing his many virtues and talents, while the sculptured sides of the monument symbolised the many pursuits in which he was proficient.

One evening, riding with my eldest brother, we resolved to go up to the castle of Sant' Elmo (then the Chelsea Hospital of Naples) in order to view the sunset from the summit of the hill. When we arrived at the gates of the fortress, we found that we were too late to be admitted, but I looked so disappointed, and pleaded so piteously to be allowed to pass, that a soldier who was standing by offered to go in and ask the Commandant for his permission. The request was readily granted. We dismounted from our horses, and made our way on to the terrace, where we were welcomed by the good old general, who was enjoying his coffee, and kindly asked us to join him. He was already long past middle age, with a military bearing, for he had seen much good service, and with a kind, genial manner, which warmed into enthusiasm when he found we spoke his language with fluency. He did the honours of the place and of the pretty garden which embellished the grim old castle, and the magnificent view it commanded; for Naples lay beneath us, the blue Mediterranean dotted with islands, the country towards Baiæ on one side, Pompeii on the other, stretching out into the

distance, the Villa Reale, enlivened by numerous groups of gay pedestrians, and the fire and smoke of Vesuvius in the background.

We lingered on the terrace a long time, until the moon rose over the bay, and then, bidding our new friend good-night, gratefully accepted his invitation to return there again, and, above all, to bring my sister and my brother Charles, who were shortly expected from England, to enjoy that beautiful prospect.

Dear old General Ruberti! May I be forgiven if I boast of so decided a conquest. From that time till we left Naples, he would send me constant presents of sweet nosegays, of delicious fruits, and of different kinds of dried fish, and any other especial Neapolitan delicacy, the packets usually tied up with coloured ribbons, and invariably accompanied by a large square letter directed:

"*Aa sua eccellenza,*
La nobil donzella,
Donna Marietta Boyle,
Palazzo Calabritti,"

which bore very little resemblance to a *billet-doux*, either outside or in. Yet the contents were usually of a tender and complimentary nature, and surely never were love-letters more peculiar in their character. They were written by proxy in the large, full round hand of a secretary, very eloquent and very flowery, with a most affectionate yet respectful heading and ending, while at the bottom of the paper, in a little cramped and rather trembling hand, came the signature of my devoted admirer,

"*Ruberti, Generale Commandante di Sant° Elmo.*"

Natural as was the pride I felt in the conquest of so elevated an adorer, it was nothing to the glory which awaited me. One evening I was bidden with my mother and the whole of the family to dinner, and a most excellent repast was served to us on the beautiful terrace, and when the purple shades of night deepened in the sky, the grim old Castle of Sant' Elmo burst forth into brilliant illuminations —and all this in honour of Donna Marietta. I have never since gazed on a picture or drawing of Naples the beautiful, crowned with the old castle, without remembering that proud night in my life. Dear, noble old general!

When King Bomba issued his commands that the Commandante should fire upon his countrymen from the heights above the town, the patriot refused, and, in spite of his previous services and advanced age, was cast into prison. A tribute is paid to this noble rebel in Ruffini's pathetic tale of "Dr Antonio."

He outlived his captivity, and shortly before his death (which, I think, took place at Turin) sent me a letter with a string of coral beads, to entwine, as he expressed himself, in my golden hair, by that lover of Italian freedom, the Countess Belgiojoto, a connection, by the way, of our Poet-Laureate.[1]

Naples, justly called the beautiful, appeared to us on another occasion under what might well be termed a miraculous aspect. It was the feast of the Madonna dell' Arco. When the Neapolitans leave the city to purchase in some neighbouring district rural utensils of husbandry, such as rakes, pitchforks, baskets of various shapes, etc.

[1] Alfred Lord Tennyson.

they return at evening into the city with these implements crowned with flowers and decked with coloured ribbons a species of triumphal procession, which formed the subject many years ago for a charming little picture by the Italian painter, "Urvins," which decorates one of the small rooms in Lord Lansdowne's splendid collection at Bowood.

But let it not be supposed that the mirthful Neapolitans marched stiffly, or walked sedately into the city at the close of the festival. Oh, no! the whole procession danced into the town with all the varying steps of the tarantella, the men wheeling and circling round the women, and shaking and striking the tambourines above their heads; and on the glorious afternoon in question, the Madonna was propitious, and across the whole city was thrown a rainbow of immense magnitude and brilliant colours, framing with its prismatic arch one of the most glorious pictures that can be imagined, and promising to the happy citizens a fertile and beautiful season.

The arrangement of the hours of the day at Naples during the summer was a source of great amusement to us. The belfry of a neighbouring church tolled the hours, but only as far as six, so that when, according to our English reckoning, it was 7 P.M., the clock struck one, and the hour was called twenty-four.

One more curious experience befell me at Naples—Naples the delight of her citizens, as the old carbonari song says, which strangers are enjoined to see before they die. I slept in a corner room opening into those of my mother and my sister, the two doors being in an angle

close to each other, and, of course, always open during the summer months (they were all passage rooms). I had not slept there very long, before I came to the conclusion that my apartment was haunted. Every night there passed through from one door to the other the figure of a woman, so hastily, so softly, that I was only aware of the movement and the scarcely perceptible flutter of a garment. At first I supposed it was my sister, and called out, but received no answer. I said very little—I am not sure, but I believe I kept silence altogether on the subject; the servants would have been terrified, the rest of the family sceptical, so I and my ghost kept our own counsel. I had not the slightest fear, or feeling even bordering on excitement, but I was curious, and determined to test myself whether the vision was a fancy of my own; so I used to look up and think, "Now I shall see it," but that did not succeed, and afterwards when I was thinking of something else there she was, or rather there she went, her movements being visible to me by the glimmer of outside *cafés*, etc., which were never extinguished till dawn, and my curtains were closed.

My visitor was very faithful, but was not regular in her hours. She never made her presence known by any audible sound, unless the piercing shriek that I heard one night, some hours after I had gone to bed, had any connection with my ghostly friend. I was roused from my slumber by a scream which appeared to me to come from our drawing-room, which was three rooms off from mine. I dashed out of bed and found my sister, who had sat up late, calmly writing letters to England, and she

naturally took me for a ghost, as I made my sudden appearance in my night attire.

I sometimes also heard my name called when no one was by, but that was all I ever saw or knew of the ghost of the Palazzo Calabritti. Neither could I in any way account for the apparition, unless the question could be solved by our Neapolitan housemaid saying to me one day:

"Ah! a poor young lady from your country died in that bed, for the love of the Prince of Capua."

I think the poor girl must have had the most susceptible heart, for that royal prince had little to recommend him, either in looks or in character, although he shortly afterwards married an English wife. We heard sad stories of him while we were at Naples, and how he persecuted a beautiful young Englishwoman by his attentions, and in revenge for the slight she put upon him, endeavoured to compromise her by causing his empty carriage to stand almost every night at her door. In order to defeat his wicked design, this fair creature would walk up and down the pavement before her own house, sometimes for hours together, until fatigue drove her in. Yet I must confess we were indebted to this reprobate prince for a delightful sail to the island of Capri, he having lent my sailor brother the small yacht in which he made frequent cruises.

It was a glaring hot July day, and going below, to escape the heat of the sun, I was most unpleasantly impressed by the gaudy colouring of the cabin and its fittings. Why on earth, thought I, should a Neapolitan prince sport

the Royal Stuart tartan, which, however dear to loyal eyes, looked tawdry and incongruous in such a position. It was some time before I discovered the meaning of the sentiments or the allusions to "Prince Charlie," as the Prince of Capua bore that name.

Now while we are on the subject of the Bay of Naples, and the yacht is in the harbour, I must mention that the skipper of Lord Anglesey's charming craft, the *Pearl*, was an Irishman, but of so refined and educated a class that, avoiding all temptations to brogue, he invariably called the crater of Mount Vesuvius "the creature."

Bidding adieu to beautiful Naples, we embarked on a French steamer for Leghorn, and had so fine a passage that we were able to sleep both nights on deck, "under the roof of blue *Italian* weather," and make our way to Pisa, *en route* for Florence.

CHAPTER XV

PISA AND FLORENCE

THESE two cities have always appeared to me to bear a strong family likeness to each other, the same river running through the principal streets, although the buildings on the quays are very different. They are like two sisters: Pisa, the elder, the more sedate, the graver of the two, while Florence, the younger, is all smiles and gladness. But in one respect we were very fortunate, for we saw Pisa under a most cheerful aspect. There is, or was (for I do not know if it continues), a triennial festival in honour of her patron saint, St Ranieri, on which occasion the whole town is illuminated, not, after the fashion of an English illumination, with crowns and stars and badges and devices, but by the marking out of the architecture of palaces, churches, and bridges with lines of light, so that the city bears the appearance of being built in fire. Beautiful as this effect would be in almost all cities, it is doubly so in Pisa, more especially on account of that noble group of buildings, the Cathedral, the Baptistery, and the Leaning Tower. The last edifice, in particular, presents a most singular and beautiful aspect with the spiral lines of light, which define so vividly the peculiar and fantastic form of the erection.

We walked about the streets during the greater part of the night, amid the most amiable and good-humoured crowd with which it was ever my lot to mingle.

I cannot help recording here a curious story which was told me by an English lady at Pisa. A countrywoman of hers, a young girl, said to her one day when they were standing together in the Baptistery, admiring the celebrated pulpit, which is supported on the backs of four lions:

"That reminds me of such a curious dream I had last night. I thought I was standing here where we are now, and that I put my hand into the lion's open mouth, when he bit it off." Suiting the action to the word, the girl thrust her hand into the marble creature's jaws, uttered a cry of agony, and pulled it out hurriedly. The lion's mouth contained a nest of scorpions, one of which had stung her so severely as to necessitate immediate measures to ensure the safety of her injured hand.

Our winter season[1] at Florence was as brilliant as that at Rome, and, to me, more delightful in one respect, as I obtained a theatrical engagement. On the walls of Florence stood a large and commodious house (I know not if it still exists). It then belonged to Mr Rowland Standish, and was called by his name; it had a large garden and a very pretty theatre. The mistress—the lessee, the manageress, the friend of all who came near her, whether professionally or socially—was Lady Lucy Standish,[2]

[1] The winter season of the early months of 1834; see subsequent notes.

[2] Lady Lucy Perry, third daughter of Edmund Henry, first Earl of Limerick; married 1816 to Rowland Stephenson, who took the name of Standish in 1834.

beneath whose auspices the little theatre became the resort of a happy company, both before and behind the curtain.

How excellent were some of our actors and actresses! Ah! I fear very few survive to read this feeble tribute. Among other performances, we gave an ambitious representation of the old comedy, *A Cure for the Heart-ache*, in which the Secretary of our Legation, Mr George Edgcumbe,[1] especially distinguished himself as the "yokel" of the piece. He had lately become engaged to Miss Shelley, a fair friend and countrywoman of mine, but however preoccupied his heart may have been, it did not interfere with the rare skill with which he played a difficult, and some would have considered ungrateful, *rôle*. The villain of the play, who had designs on the sister of the ploughman, lays a scheme by which to get the latter into his power. He places a purse full of money (one of those large elongated purses with which in old melodramas the wicked peer always tempted the virtuous peasant) within the grasp of the poverty-stricken brother, when summoned on some pretext to the great house. After a short soliloquy, lamenting his penury and the like, the ploughman looks round, sees the golden bait, and chinks the guineas. Then follows a silent pause. The temptation at first appears irresistible; you see the struggles which are passing in the poor fellow's mind, the difficulty of resistance, the final victory over himself, and the well-expressed air of reproach

[1] The Honourable George Edgcumbe, second son of Richard, second Earl of Mount Edgcumbe; married 19th May 1834 Fanny Lucy, eldest daughter of Sir John Shelley, sixth Baronet.

and indignation with which he hands the purse to his tempter on his entering the room.

May I be forgiven for adding a little incident concerning my own performance? I played the rich heiress whose betrothed lover throws her over at the end of the piece, in favour of her penniless rival. I thought it would be neat and appropriate at such a juncture to make my exit in violent hysterics, and in that state I repaired to my dressing-room, where I was calmly employed in changing my dress for the after piece, when the door burst open and my sister rushed in, terror-stricken.

"O Mary," she said, "you will kill yourself; this dreadful excitement is too much for you!"

I looked up and she looked down. I was certainly the calmer of the two, but my vanity had received a most flattering compliment.

How well I remember the night of our first rehearsal. At its termination, the gentleman who had kindly undertaken the onerous office of prompter thus addressed us from his hooded seat on the stage:—"Ladies and gentlemen, I am most anxious to give you all satisfaction, and in order to do so, I have taken down every separate direction given me by each member of the company, as to the especial manner in which he or she wishes me to prompt, such as, "When I look at you, not before." "Will you run on in a low voice the whole time?" "Never mind if I substitute one small word for another," etc.

He then read each order, with the name of the giver, and summed up the total. There were twenty-two entirely different, most specific orders!

"May I enquire," he continued, "what I am to do to content you all?"

His harangue was received with a burst of laughter, and the resolution was carried *nem. con.* that we must all be "letter perfect." We very often beat for recruits when we heard of any new English arrival in Florence, and as we were about to cast a play of which one of the characters was a decided plunger, I was deputed to ask a certain gallant hussar, when I next danced with him, if he would help us. I did so, he gladly accepted, and I made an appointment with him to come to Casa Standish the next evening at rehearsal hour, when his part would be read for him. When he arrived, I repeated mine, which contained many tender passages with my Plunger; but each time I approached him he gazed at me in a more and more threatening manner, till at last I fancied that he was more likely to strike than to caress me. The effect was peculiar—the prompter reading declarations in the most affectionate and insinuating terms, while the lover looked daggers, not to say swords and pistols, at the unoffending *jeune première.* At length the crisis came. I had to recline gracefully on his shoulder (he was six feet two), and to confess how entirely I reciprocated his ardent love.

He bent over me, and in a stage whisper, with a look of thunder that might have shattered nerves less strong than mine, said:—

"If you keep me to my promise, I leave Florence to-night."

This was the second time I had been thrown over, but this time if I had become hysterical, it would have been

through laughter. The Inamorato did not explain why he broke his engagement, but he had never trod the stage till then, and I suppose the prompter's box, the footlights and the whole dramatic apparatus produced an unmitigated stage fright.

Neither will I omit to make mention of a favourite member of our troupe, who distinguished himself in more ways than one: this was the clever pony belonging to the son of the house, whose stable was in the garden. Often in the intervals of our day rehearsal it was the delight of the then school-boys to mount me on "Hotspur's" back, and slipping the rein, he would dash off at the word of command, taking the bit in his mouth, and making the circuit of the garden at the fullest of all speeds. I well knew that those boys fondly hoped that the day would come when they would see their playfellow (myself) dismounted from her exalted position, but I am proud to think I disappointed them.

On one occasion a magnificent *ballet d'action* was in preparation. The daughter of General de Courcy, a leading member of the Anglo-Florentine society, was to represent "Fatima" in a gorgeous Eastern costume, which became her beauty well, while I took the scarcely less responsible *rôle* of "Sister Anne."

Standishes of all ages and both sexes took part in this brilliant spectacle, while the part of "Selim," the rescuer of the lovely Fatima, was acted by the young Marquis Talleyrand de Perigord, eldest son of the Duc de Dinon, who had lately become a resident in Florence. We were very glad to secure the services of the young Marquis, who

was handsome, accomplished and agreeable, and who, moreover, was not likely to be unwilling to enact the part of rescuer to the fair Fatima, seeing he appeared in no way insensible to the charms of our *prima ballerina*. I was the originator of the noble idea of introducing an equestrian element into the *ballet*, and mounting the gallant soldier on young Standish's favourite pony. The effect was thrilling. The clattering of the hoofs on the stage recalled visions of international circuses. The final *tableau*, with the equine element in the back-ground, could not be surpassed for grandeur or originality; but—alas for the vanity of earthly ambition!—no power on earth could induce the pony to leave the stage—him to whom the slightest wish of his master was usually law. Threats, blows, caresses, all were in vain—he stood perfectly still—stock still, though, as grooms say, a little "handy with his heels." Here was a *contretemps*. I had to answer for the proposition, everybody was cross, supper waiting—that delightful banquet which we had honestly gained. I felt my honour was at stake. I entreated to be left alone with the rebellious charger, and my patience was put to no small test. I bandaged Hotspur's eyes, I led him round and round, and backwards and forwards, patting and coaxing him all the time, till my efforts were crowned with success, and I backed him off the stage. The horse had evidently had an attack of stage fright, as severe as that of the hussar. A long discussion ensued between all the members of the company, as to the advisability of repeating the experiment on the next evening, when the public were to be admitted; but I pleaded so hard, taking for my text,

"nothing hazard, nothing have," that the pony made "his first appearance on any stage," and despite the thunders of applause which rewarded his efforts, walked off when required to do so, as quietly as a lamb!

Ah! those were merry days at Casa Standish, and the boys and girls of that bygone time are still affectionately remembered by me, and that dear mother, Lady Lucy Standish, who presided over all our revels. I trust that any members of the family who may chance to read these lines, will not be displeased by this slight allusion to those happy days.

It was about this time, at Florence, that I first made the acquaintance and formed the friendship of the celebrated novelist of the day, G. P. R. James, whose historical romances were then in the highest favour with the reading public. I was one of his great admirers, and was delighted to be made known to him, but it was reserved for me in future days to fathom the depths of that high and generous nature, and that warm and noble heart. He had hired a beautiful villa in the environs of the city, which afterwards became the property of the Countess of Crawford, Villa Palmieri, and which has been occupied by our beloved Queen Victoria. It was on one of Florence's golden afternoons that my mother and I drove out to dine with Mr and Mrs James, and I pressed for the first time those hands which were ever afterwards stretched out to me in kindness and hospitality.

Amongst the residents at this season in Tuscany's fair capital was Caroline Bonaparte, the widow of Joachim Murat, the favourite sister of the Emperor Napoleon I.,

whom he described as having the head of a great man on the shoulders of a pretty woman. Ex-Queen of Naples, she was living at that time on the Lung'arno, under the anagrammatic title of Countess Lipona (Napoli), and supposed, with little doubt, to be the wife of Marshal Macdonald. I think the epithet "captivating" might well be applied to her; she was small and fair, and, although advanced in years, bore the traces of great comeliness. I found in her a strange resemblance to our dear Princess Mary of England, Duchess of Gloucester, and she was in no wise displeased when I told her so.

Countess Lipona was much beloved and respected at Florence, and had a great liking and admiration for Félicie de Fauveau, in spite of their political antagonism, and it was owing to the last-mentioned friend that I had the privilege and delight of making her acquaintance. I always approached her as a royal personage, remembering what she had been, and made what I considered a conscientious compromise by using the title of *altesse*. On one occasion, at a masquerade, where I personated a "Marchande de Cœurs," and carried a basket full of hearts, dramatic, poetical, diplomatic, and the like, I constructed a gigantic golden heart inscribed "Cœur de Caroline," on which I paid an honest tribute to the extraordinary courage and equanimity with which she had borne the vicissitudes of a cruel destiny. This golden heart had no price; it was to be given up to the august Caroline for the value of a single smile, and kneeling at the feet of the Princess I so much admired, I presented her there and then with the greatest treasure in my basket. I can remember her appearance well; she was

dressed in a domino of light green silk, trimmed with costly lace, green and white, the colours of the Legitimist party, and she laughingly called on Félicie de Fauveau to account for her selection of that combination. Now, Félicie was a genuine woman, and was never at a loss for an answer, and this was her gracious and loyal reply:

"Madame," she said, "c'est pour nous les faire aimer de toutes les manières."

How well I recall that night. Some of the English and Scotch guests arranged to dance a reel, and I had the good fortune to perform my part immediately before the spot where Countess Lipona was sitting. At the termination of the dance, she beckoned to me, and, with a kind kiss, presented me with her fan, "as a reward," she said, "for the manner in which I had danced the *écossaise*."

It may well be imagined how dearly I cherish this relic of bygone days, and even more so the small bracelet of hair which she sent me the ensuing year by my cousin, Lady Clinton, who was travelling in Italy shortly after her second marriage with Sir Horace Seymour. By the way, the coupling of these two names, I was assured, caused some animadversions among the society of a city where you would not have expected the inhabitants to be extra strait-laced. But our peculiar English custom of widows retaining the rank of the first husband, if superior to that of the second, is very perplexing to the mind of a foreigner, as in other European countries the wife is naturally expected to bear the name of the suitor whom she accepts.

The last visit I paid to Caroline Bonaparte was deeply interesting to me. She showed me the portrait of her

brother Napoleon, when quite young, a calm and gentle countenance, with fair complexion and golden hair. How different from the well-known picture painted in later days by David, of the dark, menacing warrior of the passage of the Alps. Then Madame Lipona pointed out to me another portrait, that of her husband Joachim Murat, answering to the description that I had heard and read of him—what we should call in England a "fine specimen," with a perfect mane of dark hair and flashing eyes, broad-shouldered, with an imperious aspect, in full and gorgeous uniform, grand in his way, but lacking refinement. His wife spoke of him with tenderness, and then said to me:

"I have a treat in store for you. Go into the next room, and there, scattered all around, you will find arms of all sorts and kinds, which were once the property of the King of Naples."

I obeyed her, and gazed with delight and interest on the accumulated treasures which met my eye. I had often heard that Murat had an especial taste for military weapons of all kinds, and that in the days of his prosperity those potentates or authorities who thought it advisable to win his favour, usually selected some ornamental implement of warfare as a stepping-stone thereto. Here were pistols richly set with precious stones, which sparkled as I held them in my hand, muskets with the butts inlaid in particoloured wood, and swords and sabres, the gorgeous mountings of their scabbards out-done by the delicate flexibility of their Damascus blades. But what riveted my attention most, was a sword

lying on the ground beside the Marshal's *bâton* of black velvet *semé* with golden eagles, for the sword in question, hilt and scabbord, bore small and well-painted miniatures of the wife and children Murat loved so dearly. As I held the weapon reverently in my hand, I recalled the last pathetic scene of the ex-king's life, how, when about to receive his death wound, he bade his executioners pause for one instant, while he drew a locket from his bosom, and, raising the image of his beloved Caroline to his lips, gave the order to fire, in as steady a voice as he would have bade his cavalry charge.

That was the last time I saw that kind and gracious princess—now upwards of half a century ago—but still, in the secret recesses of an old box, I have a faded rose which one day bloomed on her table, and was given to me by a devoted admirer of us both.

Another friend, of a widely opposed class and calling, was Geppina, the flower-girl of Florence, a well-known character for many succeeding years in the beautiful city. When I first knew her, she too, was young, and from a peculiar waywardness and eccentricity in her manner, had obtained the nickname of *pazzina*, which would answer to the Scotch appellation of "daft." There were also some strange stories afloat respecting her being a Court spy, a rumour to which I disdained to give credit, for Geppina and I became great friends, and the origin of that friendship I will describe, as I did at the time, in verse:—

> "It was a bright, gay morning; in the square
> Of Holy Trinity, there passed a pair

On horseback ; gloomily they went—
Their wit, or sympathy, perhaps was spent.
Sudden, above the woman's head there flew
A flower, a lily-bell of spotless hue,
Too pure, too modest—if the truth I tell—
Too spotless for the hand on which it fell.
Disdaining to look round, she reared her head,
And with the bold, proud look of those ill-bred
And nurtured, did she cast the flower
Down on the ground—beneath her horse's feet,
Down on the muddy pavement of the street ;
While poor Geppina there, aghast, amazed,
Upon her scouted offering sadly gazed—
When one stood by her. With an eager bound,
Which indignation in itself expressed,
She raised the sullied lily from the ground,
And placed it, soiled and drooping, on her breast.
And from that day the mad girl's choicest flowers
Fell round the English maiden's path in showers ;
At home, abroad, at morning, eve and night,
Fresh fragrant garlands blossomed in her sight :
And sweet indeed are those fair Florence weaves
In early spring—the Tyrian violet,
Snowy camellia with the burnished leaves,
Cassia, whose perfume wakes a fond regret,
Myrtle, carnation, and the first young rose,
With almond-scented jessamine that throws
A sweet, faint perfume as the buds unclose."

Of Geppina, I shall have more to say in future pages. Our connection and friendship were by no means confined to my first visit to Florence.

CHAPTER XVI

RETURN TO ENGLAND—ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA —HER CORONATION

IN the year 1836 my eldest brother was married to Miss Ogle, in my opinion the most beautiful bride I have ever seen, before or since. They came to reside with us for a time, but the arrangement did not last long, and they went abroad and settled in Paris. The year 1837 was one of great sorrow for my sister, and indeed for all of us, as the health of her dear kind master, William the Fourth, began to fail.

In the month of May I went with my mother to pay a visit of a few days to Princess Mary, Duchess of Gloucester, at her house in Park Lane. We had been more than once the guests of this dear and kind Princess, at her delightful residence at Bagshot Park, but this was the first time I had slept under her hospitable roof in London. She was a most gracious lady, and full of delightful old-world anecdotes of her father's court, and ever ready to appreciate and to promulgate a joke or a good story.

I would sit and listen with gratitude to all she had to tell me of old days. I had a great admiration (what in

the modern vernacular is called a "cult") for the talent of Mrs Jordan, although it was only inspired by hearsay, as she was before my time. My mother had often told me that she would have considered it worth her while to go to the theatre, merely to hear the silvery ringing laugh of that actress behind the scenes, even if she had not waited for the performance of the play. I spoke of Mrs Jordan to the Duchess, and she told me she quite concurred in my mother's opinion. She also gave me a very interesting account of accompanying her royal parents to the play one night, when the actress in question was to perform one of her favourite characters. "I was much excited, my dear Mary," said the Duchess, "at the prospect of seeing the woman in whom I knew my brother William was deeply interested; but that evening was destined to be one of terrible excitement."

It was the occasion on which the king's life was attempted in the theatre. His escape was miraculous, and as he was most popular with his subjects, the alarm and consternation, with the subsequent enthusiasm and rejoicing of the audience, baffled all description. The performance was interrupted, the National Anthem loudly demanded, and the king vociferously called for, having to bow his thanks from the front of the Royal Box. When Mrs Jordan made her appearance her reception was warmer than usual, and, connected as she was with the interests of the Royal family, her excitement and agitation were such that she fairly broke down, and burst into a fit of hysterical sobbing, which did not help to calm down the general ferment of the evening. It was during our visit at

Gloucester House that William the Fourth's health failed, and, his days being numbered, all eyes were fixed on his young successor, Princess Victoria.

"To-night," said the Duchess to my mother, "I am dining with the Duke of Cambridge, and you and little Mary can either dine at home, or I will order my carriage earlier, and send you to dine with a friend."

The latter alternative was chosen, and we entered the Royal carriage in state, with the coachman and footmen resplendent in scarlet and gold. It was Derby Day, and as we proceeded down Grosvenor Place, what wonder that the lowly occupants of that coach should be mistaken for the highest personages in the land. As we moved along, all heads were bowed, all hats raised. I took advantage of the occasion. I was about the same size, and of the same fair complexion and the same coloured hair as Princess Victoria, and I knew in a moment for whom I had the honour to be mistaken; so I imitated the courtesy which I felt sure Her Royal Highness would have evinced in the same circumstances, and I bowed repeatedly, first from one and then the other window, but that with such deceitful haste that the imposture could not be detected. My mother expostulated with me on my effrontery, but to no purpose; I was so much pleased with my own joke that I continued it the whole length of Grosvenor Place. How well I remember how entirely I sympathised, even while I deplored the death of our good kind king, in the love and enthusiasm which that young, blue-eyed, golden-haired, girlish Sovereign excited. There was something so picturesque, so romantic, to me, so like some fairy-tale of old,

in the fair creature who reigned over this mighty Empire! I saw her one night at the Opera House, where she went in state, and a brilliant reception awaited her. I do not think I had ever seen her since two or three years before, when at the opening of Parliament she mounted the steps of the throne, and kissed the hand of her uncle, William the Fourth, while the dear old king, in his sailor's uniform, surrounded by royal robes, stooped down and embraced the little princess, who was so soon to succeed him.

In recalling that night at the Opera, I remember how, later in the evening, the door of the Royal Box opened to admit the Duke of Wellington, who naturally shared in the honours of the evening. It was to me a touching, beautiful sight, to see the young Queen give her hand to the old warrior and lead him forward to the front to obtain a reception from the audience, scarcely second in enthusiasm to her own.

Another time I saw her, in circumstances indelibly impressed on my memory. It was on her Coronation day, and the splendour and brilliancy of that scene, the gorgeous dresses, the magnificent solemnity of the whole ceremony, do not recur so often to my recollection as the time when, seated on her Regal chair, she received the homage of the Peers of England. One of the eldest among them, Lord Rolle, who had passed the allotted span of life, in approaching to do her honour, tottered, and nearly fell to the ground, while she, with a gracious and merciful impulse, rose with outstretched arms to save him from what might have been a painful fall. I was just above the spot in question, and

well remember the sort of buzz or whisper that spread far and near among those who witnessed this touching incident.

I have nothing of interest to record in the events of the next two or three years.

CHAPTER XVII

MILLARD'S HILL—TENBY—CHARLES YOUNG AND A COURT BALL

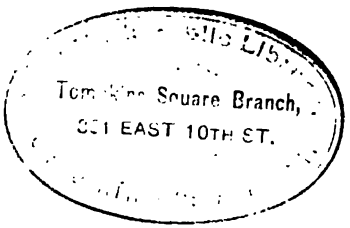
IN the year 1840, my mother gave up the apartments she had so long occupied at Hampton Court Palace—the place having become intolerable to her since the death of her beloved and only brother, Mr Poyntz, who had died suddenly at his house on the Green. This bereavement determined her to accept the offer of her brother-in-law, Lord Cork, to take possession of a small house on his property in Somersetshire, called Millard's Hill, an unostentatious building, in a very picturesque part of the county. We took great delight in furnishing and decorating the empty rooms with our pictures and china and "treasures from many lands"—in fact, in storing our household gods, without which, no house can ever be a home. Uncomely as was the exterior of the building, the situation and surroundings were very pretty—a perfect specimen of English field and woodland, and the neighbouring walks, rides and drives were delightful. Added to these, there was another charm in my eyes, the possibility (which was very difficult for us at Hampton Court) of having domestic pets—ponies, dogs—of many different kinds, and last,

though not least, a beautiful peacock of gorgeous plumage, the present of my dear friend and close neighbour, the Duchess of Somerset. "Narcissus" was as proud and jealous as he was beautiful, but very tame, and would come in at the open window, of a summer's morning, while we were at breakfast, and eat out of my hand. On one occasion, finding my Scotch terrier sitting beside me, he flew spitefully at the interloper, and pecked him so furiously as to drive him from the field. "Chaillach," my trusty Skye,—whom I once described as something between Lord Rochester's wig and a door-mat; who was never out of temper, and never out of mischief—the dauntless Chaillach, whose spirit never quailed before a mastiff or a blood-hound—to be put to confusion by a mere bird!

Of Millard's Hill and the days we passed there, I shall have to say more in a future page. In 1842 I accompanied my mother, my two younger brothers, and my sister to the prettiest sea-side town I know—Tenby, in South Wales, rich in beetling cliffs, venerable old castles, picturesque manor houses, the fields and woods of which boasted of a flora of such varied character as to attract the notice and admiration of botanists as unscientific as ourselves. Here we were joined, to the enhancement of every pleasure, by a beautiful girl and fast friend, who shared in all our pursuits inside the house and all our excursions abroad, whom I will designate here by the name of Fanny. I used to call her my damask-rose, on account of her brilliant colouring; she was at that time in the full bloom of early youth, and endowed with a high

MILLARD'S HILL WITH "NARCISSUS" IN THE FOREGROUND.
From a Drawing by E. V. B.

[*To face page* 164.


Tompkins Square Branch,
331 EAST 10TH ST.

spirit, but scarcely seven years had passed from that time, ere I was called to shed bitter tears over her tragical and untimely end.

In one of our excursions from Tenby, we visited Stackpole, a charming residence of the Earl of Cawdor, where many years later I became a guest, to assist at the marriage of a dear nephew with one of the fair daughters of that noble house, and to contract a real friendship with the kind and genial representative of Shakespeare's Thane.

Much as we all enjoyed our seaside walks and hairbreadth "'scapes" from the sudden influx of the tide, a temptation to absent ourselves for a while came, at least to the two youngest members of the family, in the shape of an invitation (rather should I say a command) to a Court Ball. It certainly appeared a long way to go to a ball, even for me, with my dancing propensities, but, this was a *bal costumé*, and therefore doubly attractive in my eyes.

I must confess I never regretted the effort my brother Cavendish and I made on that occasion, for the memory of that night's scene is one from which I should be loth to part.

I was to be escorted to the palace by two gentlemen of the time of William III., dressed in the garb which is so well-known in the pictures of the Prince of Orange's landing in England. Their long square-cut coats, their costly lace cravats, and their long flowing wigs, made the two cousins (who bore a near resemblance to each other) look like twins, while I had selected the character, in nowise analogous, of "Sweet Anne Page." The amusement found

in arranging our costumes was greatly heightened by the assistance we derived from Charles Young, and the constant visits he paid us in consequence.

This eminent tragedian and delightful man, with winning voice, beautiful smile, and captivating manner, was ever most kind to me, whom he called his "wild child," and did he not on that very night lend me his own magnificent pair of diamond shoe-buckles (the present of some great potentate) to "glitter and sparkle," as he said, "on my little feet"?

The ball was given at St James's,[1] and caused great excitement in London, festivities of that kind having long fallen into disuse. It was a beautiful and deeply interesting scene, and, in my eyes, the most beautiful personage in the whole pageant was the Prince Consort! He had chosen the character of Edward III., wearing a surcoat richly embroidered with the arms of France and England, over a complete suit of armour, his open vizor and perfect profile surmounted by a kingly crown; he looked, indeed, as Tennyson has it, "A very perfect knight."

By his side stood his faithful and loving wife, Philippa, in queenly robes, also rich in heraldic blazonry, displaying in her whole costume that adherence to historical correctness which did my dramatic heart good. The dress was rather a heavy one for our fair young Sovereign, but she bore it bravely, and her dignified and graceful dancing was the theme of universal praise.

I can vividly recall many of the different characters which were assumed for that night only. How well my

[1] (?) Buckingham Palace.

dear cousin, Lady Exeter,[1] looked as Queen Elizabeth of York; how Lord Cardigan, in a magnificent suit of elaborate armour, presented a very grand representation of the brave Bayard, the chevalier (who was at least, *sans peur*), and my eccentric friend, Lord Houghton, showed his poetical taste by appearing as the great Chaucer. But why enumerate a list of names, the greater part of which, alas! belong no more to the living.

Having connected Charles Young with the commencement of this chapter, I wish to make mention of some further circumstances which recur to my memory regarding him. It was during my stay in London at this period that the celebrated German actor, Emil Devrient, whose beauty rivalled his talent, was acting in London. I was anxious to study the manner in which Devrient would render some of the principal scenes, and I accordingly carried with me my well-thumbed and dog's-eared volume of Goethe's "Faust." I did not intend, as many of my compatriots do, to concentrate my attention the whole evening on my book, but merely to observe the manner in which he gave some favourite passages; but my dear old friend would not allow of my doing so, in patience. He seized the volume, and in a tone of irritation unusual to him, exclaimed: "My dear child, do put down that dead book and look at that blessed man!" Charles Young was already old when I first knew him, but singularly handsome, looking like a hero of romance. Indeed his early life had a decidedly romantic colouring.

The heroine of his story was a beautiful Italian girl, of

[1] Isabella Poyntz married to Brownlow, second Marquis of Exeter.

a noble family, which had given more than one Doge to Venice. She had come with her father at a time of political trouble to England, and, like many other Italian emigrants, they had supported themselves by teaching their beautiful language.

The daughter, indeed, had become a resident governess in the family of an English nobleman, where she was deservedly a favourite—so much so, indeed, as to make a deep impression on the susceptible heart of the young heir-apparent of the title. Amiable and accomplished as was the fair Venetian, the union was not calculated to obtain the parents' approbation; and Giulia was not one to repay kindness by causing strife in the family. The young Englishman would have braved his father's displeasure on this point, but the noble girl withstood the temptation which presented itself, and with a sad heart left the house where she had spent many happy days. Pondering how best to make use of her talents, which were considerable, and to gain a subsistence for herself, Giulia determined to go upon the stage, and it was in her capacity as an actress that she became acquainted with Charles Young, who was at that time playing the part of first lover (if I mistake not) in some provincial theatre. It was love at first sight, with the lover in question, and a beautiful young couple they must have been in those far-off days; but alas! within the year she died in giving birth to a son, named Julian, after his mother. During the time that I lived at Hampton Court, Julian Young was appointed Chaplain to the Palace, and he became the husband of my friend, Annie Willis.

This favourite companion was a distinguished member of our dramatic corps, and shared in the laurels which the Sheridans, my two brothers and self, acquired in our amateur theatricals. She was deservedly admired, and I well remember Lord Normanby (the ambassador) whispering to me the night her engagement was announced: "What a pretty little edition of Young's 'Night Thoughts.'"

CHAPTER XVIII

1844. TRIP TO THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

IT was during the summer of 1844 that my dear father, who had been in failing health for some time, breathed his last at the small wayside hotel at Salt-Hill, near Slough. It has since been burned down, but was well known in former years as the resort of the Eton scholars, at the time of Montem. My father had gone thither for change of air, in company with his life-long friend and favourite mess-mate, Sir Willoughby Lake, who did not long survive him.

In the first days of that beautiful autumn I embarked at Southampton with my cousin, Richard Boyle,[1] and my brothers Charles and Cavendish, to pay visits to the Governors of Guernsey and Alderney. After a prosperous but rather rough voyage towards those "iron-bound" coasts, we arrived at Havilland Hall, the Government House of Guernsey, then inhabited by Sir William Napier (one of the chief heroes of the Peninsular War, and also the historian of it) with his delightful wife and beauti-

[1] The Reverend the Honourable Richard Boyle, youngest son of Edmund, eighth Earl of Cork and Orrery; married, 1845, Eleanor Vere, daughter of Alexander Gordon, Esq., of Ellon, N.B.

ful daughters. Cavendish, indeed, did not remain with us long, for, much as he esteemed the Napier family, his regiment, the 48th, being quartered in Guernsey, yet at that moment the less fertile and picturesque island of Alderney possessed greater attractions for him.

It was, indeed, a very good time that we passed under the roof of Havilland Hall. We were a happy band of friends, and our daily rides, pleasant excursions, and joyous evenings will long be remembered.

It was a fair group that clustered round the magnificent old "warrior"—that was the name he bore among us—to whose remarkable beauty a portrait in my possession, painted expressly for me by Sir William Boxall, R.A., bears undoubted testimony, as does a painting by that eminent artist, George Watts, taken during the General's last illness, of which I have a splendid engraving. Sir William Napier was tall and commanding of stature, a soldier every inch of him, with black eyebrows and snowy hair, which grew as hair used to grow in Classic times, with eyes all alive and full of fire, with an eager, penetrating look, and though, alas! for some time before his death he could not move quickly, yet it was easy to perceive that in youth quickness of all kinds must have been his especial characteristic. You felt sure that in earlier days his movements must have kept pace with the eager flashing of his eye and the varied intonations of his powerful but melodious voice. To his proficiency in military tactics, and his splendid style in literature (I used to tell him that his descriptions of battles read as if cut into the pages with

a naked sword) Sir William added the gentler arts of painting and poesie; neither did he disdain the science of Nonsense in its higher branches. Without this common link, could we have sympathised so profoundly? Had he not descended from his high estate, to tread this neutral ground, how could he have found time or inclination to sport with his "tamed fairy"?—the name by which he ever called me.

On the occasion of my visit to Guernsey, I made a slight attempt to describe the hero's leading characteristics in verse.

SIR WILLIAM NAPIER

"O'er the forehead's high expanse,
Waves the silver crown of hair,
And the keen eyes' eagle glance,
Eyes to love and eyes to dare—
Beaming now in playful wit,
Flashing now in scornful fit.
From their jet-black brows in turn,
Fierce or tender, gentle, stern,
See the nostrils' eager line,
Nose of purest aquiline,
And the mouth that scarce concealed—
Though the beard be dark and long
(Forms so marked must be revealed)—
High resolve and purpose strong,
With a spirit bold and free
To impetuosity!
Aye, without that corselet bright,
Or the good sword by his side,
You would read him for a knight,
For a soldier brave and tried;
You would know that form to be
A lingering light of chivalry.

During our visit at Guernsey, the Charles Keans came over with a Dramatic Company, and gave several performances at the theatre, at each of which the Governor, his family and suite, regularly attended.

The plays selected were for the most part genteel comedies, in which branch of the Drama I, for one, considered that these two clever *artistes* shone most conspicuously. They were our constant guests at dinner, the hour of which our courteous host always arranged with a view to the convenience of Mr and Mrs Kean.

They were cheerful and delightful companions, and from that day we contracted habits of friendship which ended only with their lives. I had an especial admiration for Mrs Kean, and took a deep interest in her love story —of how she and her husband had trodden the same stage in her early youth, when, as he himself informed me, she was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen; of how he flirted, and she loved; of how they parted, and did not meet again for many years; of how destiny once more brought them together in the respective characters of the hero and heroine of *The Honeymoon*. Was not that a prophetic title? The joy, the uncertainty, the excitement, the brilliant acting on both sides, in which nature was so closely entwined with art, all combined to throw Ellen Tree into a state of nervous agitation, and brought on an attack of brain-fever, so that her life was despaired of. But she recovered, and while still in the first stage of convalescence, the one most deeply interested in her restoration to health came to assist in that work.

During the course of their conversation he told her play-

fully that she was one of the best friends he had ever had, and as such he had come to ask her advice, with regard to a subject whereon his whole future happiness depended. "Do you consider," he said, "that if I could gain her consent, Ellen Tree would make me a good wife?" "I know," was the reply, "that she has long loved you better than any one else in the world, and I do not believe that any one else could love you better." And so it was settled, and a happier or more suitable union could scarcely be imagined. They were helpmeets for each other, in professional, in domestic, and in social life, and this is the verdict of one, who never lost any opportunity she had of enjoying their society, whether at their pleasant little home in Hampshire, or in any part of the world where it was possible to meet them.

But I must return from a long digression to report our further movements. In a flying visit to the queer little island of Sark, we explored its curious caves, and were shown the churchyard, "where the women and children were all buried." "And the men?" I enquired. "Ah! mademoiselle, they are always drowned." Added to this encouraging intelligence, I was assured that the "Seigneur of Sark" (the chief man in the island bears this title) would consider it a degradation to die in his bed, as it was looked upon as a hereditary privilege to find a grave in the ocean; and certainly on those terrible coasts, with their perpendicular cliffs, shoals and quicksands, such a contingency was not to be wondered at.

We then proceeded to Alderney, where we were received, on disembarking, by the Lieutenant-Governor, Captain Alexander, and his daughter Rose, the betrothed of

my brother Cavendish. He placed my hand in hers, and since that day, now so many years ago, she and I have walked hand-in-hand through many a chequered path of life, through gloom and sunshine, and, blessed be God, at this present time of which I am writing, are still spared to speak together of the days that are no more. The projected marriage was one that could give nothing but satisfaction to the members of both families, with the single drawback of slender means. In circumstances of this nature, there arises usually much discussion as to *pros* and *cons*, even among outsiders, and we often hear the question asked "What will they make up?" On this point Cavendish was beforehand with the world, when he said to me one day: "If any one asks you what *we* make up, be so good as to say, we have made up—our minds," and I can safely affirm that, from the day of their marriage, no one who loved either had ever cause to regret the step.

Moreover, between Cavendish and his father-in-law there existed a great similarity of tastes, pursuits, and moral qualities—both soldiers in heart, as well as calling, both men of cultivated and refined taste, with a keen appreciation of all that was good, beautiful, and humorous in life.

Captain, afterwards Colonel, Alexander amused me one day with an anecdote he told me of himself. He was in Paris with his wife and children at the time of the Revolution in 1830, when the English were very unpopular among the lower classes. Captain Alexander had occasion one day to pass a guard-house, round which some ill-conditioned soldiers were lounging and idling; the passer-by attracted

their attention. One of the men said to the others in an irritable and irritating tone: "Voilà Monsieur Goddam." "Qui s'en va," retorted our Englishman. "Au diable," says another soldier. Captain Alexander turned round, and taking off his hat with a sweeping bow, said "Donc, Monsieur, au plaisir de vous revoir!"

The Channel Islands appeared to me to be peopled with lovers. One of Sir William Napier's beautiful daughters had just married that gallant soldier, Colonel MacDougall. At Guernsey, I had left the General's only son engaging himself to pretty Bessie Alexander, whom we called the "white-heart cherry," on account of her pink and white, rarely-blent complexion, and here, at Alderney, I found her sister preparing to become mine. We spent a short but pleasant time with Captain Alexander and his wife. Before leaving Alderney, let me say a complimentary word in favour of the garden which surrounded the house, and confess that, even at the interval of forty years, the recollection of its peaches, apricots, and, above all, its pears, makes the "mouth of my memory" water.

Rose became an inmate of Millard's Hill, paying occasional visits to the pretty Rectory of our cousin, Richard Boyle, the Incumbent of Marston, whose unbounded hospitality became a proverb with all who knew him. The year after Cavendish's marriage this favourite cousin of ours followed the example thus set him, and gave a charming mistress to his charming home. Eleanor Gordon, known in the literary and artistic world as E. V. B., was young, lovely, and loveable. Her great talent for drawing had already attracted much admiration whilst she was still

a girl, and, after her marriage, the beautiful illustrations which she designed of "Nursery Rhymes," "A Children's Summer," "The Story Without an End," and many others too numerous to mention, acquired for her the fame she deserved. She put out her talents, indeed, to interest in a good cause, realising by the sale of her works sufficient sums to enable her to do good work in the parish. "Eleanor's Well," for that was the grateful name bestowed on it, supplied the "water," of which the villagers had long stood in need; while two beautiful windows—designed by herself—embellished her husband's lately-restored church, without mentioning the complete new roofing and a new set of Sacramental Plate—all were the proceeds of her labour. It is not often that talents are turned to so good and so unselfish account.

The erection of the little "Well" was commemorated by a friend and neighbour in the following graceful lines:—

ELEANOR'S WELL

"Fair fields were ours, touched with a mellow glow
From gorgeous clouds at rise, at set of sun,
And shadowing trees, but no glad spring had run
Beside our homes, to bless the day and night.
But see! the water flows with gentle might,
In metal highway thro' green pastures led;
And o'er the sculptured basin see it shed
A silver stream, a fall of sparkling light!
Thus with wise heart a gentle fancy wed,
Long summer morns, hath for our solace wrought;
So noble work succeeds to noble thought,
So the hand justifies the heart and head,
So the child's play to earnest close is brought
So piety to poetry is wed.

By W. M. W. CALL.

Eleanor is now the inmate of another home in a distant county, but her name is still cherished and remembered, in connection with that of the husband she mourns, among the survivors of the rural population of Marston Bigot.

The poet in question was a near neighbour, and became a constant visitor both at the Rectory and Millard's Hill. On the marriage of my brother Charles, and the prolonged absence of Cavendish and his wife in the West Indies, this friend, whom we named "Alastor," on account of his predilection for solitude, became the almost daily companion in my long walks. In the summer time we would usually take a volume of some favourite author with us, Shelley, Goethe, or Jean Paul being often selected ; of the latter we were both ardent admirers. Then, choosing some grassy knoll in one of the pretty fields which surrounded us, or some tempting shade in one of our numerous wayside woods, we would rest and read awhile. We had tastes and thoughts in common, and many were the pleasant hours thus beguiled, which are, I am well assured, forgotten by neither of us.

CHAPTER XIX

WHITTLEBURY

IN passing in review before my mind the different country houses which I have frequented at different periods of my life, I am forcibly struck by the difference in the characteristics of each. I will devote this chapter to Whittlebury Lodge in Northamptonshire, situated on the skirts of the beautiful forest of the same name, where, for many months at a time, I was the guest of kind friends to whom I have alluded in an earlier chapter.

Lord Southampton[1] was the Master of the Hounds, in which capacity he had succeeded his aged kinsman, the Duke of Grafton. Sport, therefore, was the chief characteristic and the ruling passion at Whittlebury, and I, in my small way, was one of its most zealous votaries.

During the whole of the winter our noble master kept open house, and although, as I have said before, sport and sporting men formed the chief components of that society, yet there was scarcely a leading member of the London World who was not represented at the hunting lodge. There I met and became acquainted with the well-known

[1] Charles, third Lord Southampton; born 1804; married, 1826, Harriet, daughter of Hon. Henry Fitzroy Stanhope.

Count D'Orsay, the witty Lord Alvanley, and the eccentric Colonel Leigh, brother-in-law to Lord Byron, and many others. I was an especial favourite of the last-named, and he on his side was a source of great amusement to me. I used sometimes to say to him: "So-and-So have invited me to their house in the country," and his retort courteous was, "Did they name the day?" If I remarked that such a person had a most agreeable house, he would ask: "What sort of a cook?" If I complained that the Whittlebury servants had made an enormous fire, he would rejoin: "May I ask, do you pay for the coals?" One day he insisted on my walking round the garden with him, and begged me to tell him the name of every flower as we passed. I am no botanist, and my only knowledge of flowers consists in knowing when they are sweet and beautiful; but that morning I was bent on mischief, and, one after another, I invented in succession what appeared to me the most plausible names with Latinised terminations. So far my deceit prospered, but a trial was in store for me.

The next day I was sitting at my little open window, which looked out on a picturesque portion of forest scenery, with a magnificent oak in the foreground, when my old friend came under the window and called out to me to come downstairs, a summons which I immediately obeyed. When I stepped out on the lawn, he presented his friend, Mr Elwes, to me, who had a splendid garden of his own on the other side of the county.

"We will show you over the grounds," said Colonel Leigh, "together. As you well know, I am a perfect

ignoramus where flowers are concerned, but Miss Boyle will tell you the names of every one in the whole garden."

Here was a dilemma, but I was not unequal to the occasion.

"My dear Colonel," I said, "it is all very well when I pronounce the names in your hearing, but I am not going to show off my bad Latin before so great a connoisseur as your friend."

The next day I confessed my crime, and received absolution because the trick had been successful; failure of any kind was unpardonable in the eyes of Colonel Leigh. "You scored," he said, "so I forgive you."

Poor Colonel Leigh! I was very sorry when I heard of his death, and very grateful to him for the present he made me of the last riding-whip which Byron had used at Missolonghi.

A fellow-guest of mine was Lady S———, a woman nobly born, and of exceeding beauty, hair, complexion, eyes, features, in every way remarkable, and although not unusually tall, of stature naturally far exceeding mine. She went up to Colonel Leigh one day and reproached him for never paying her a single compliment (which she might well have felt her due), "yet you are always saying flattering things to Miss Boyle!"

Colonel Leigh was not in a very good humour that morning. Looking at the beautiful speaker with a supercilious expression, he hit the only blot he could find in that fair apparition: "No, no," he said, "it won't do; you sit too high and stand too low."

Lord Southampton, the M.F.H., was most kind and

generous to me in respect to "mounts," and would apportion to me a fast hack or an easy jumper, frequently giving me a place in his phaeton, or letting me ride beside him to the place of meeting. Dear old friend! For how many days of intense enjoyment, of healthful exercise, of genial companionship, have I not been indebted to you!

He laughed when I told him that I considered it one of the proudest moments of my life when, riding quietly with him and another young lady, who complained that her horse was too fresh, he came up to me and asked the question, "How does Blanco carry you?"

"Like a lamb," I replied.

"Then jump off directly, and I will change the saddles," a compliment very flattering to my powers of horsemanship.

My ambition was always to be in the first flight, and the means I took to attain this end was as follows—

At the first whimper of the first hound breaking the covert, I looked to see who rode beside me. I knew which were the best men, and one of those I chose as my guide, following as near as I could on his horse's steps—most frequently Lord Charles Fitzroy, or the Reverend William Smith, rector of the parish—a sporting parson indeed, but one who never allowed his love for the chase to interfere with the fulfilment of more serious duties, or the constant care he bestowed on the poor and suffering. A very different personage was the Reverend Mr D——— E——— who had a living on the other side of the county, but who hunted with us one day. Both he and his curate were in the field, and coming to a blind bullfinch, at which several

horsemen came to a dead stop, the curate in question gallantly offered to go and make a gap in the fence. His Rector called after him in his usual loud voice, "Hallo, I say, if you break your neck, who is to preach my second sermon next Sunday?"

Another sporting ecclesiastic who frequented our meets was the Reverend Loraine Smith. He hunted in a purple coat, alleging as his reason that it was an episcopal colour—but I cannot tell what authority he could adduce for wearing bright yellow gloves embroidered in every tint. His Reverence was always well mounted, and was a keen sportsman. He had a pretty living and a good church in the neighbourhood, but he surprised his parishioners very much by altering the whole disposition of the tombstones; he thought they looked awkward and untidy in their actual position, so he had them all taken up and re-arranged according to his fancy in lines, crosses, squares, etc. One Sunday morning, a very cold winter's day, he had performed the service to a scanty congregation, and on going up into the pulpit, instead of opening his sermon book, he pronounced the following address:

"My dear friends, if you require it, I will preach you the sermon which I have brought with me, but if you are as cold and hungry as I am, I think you will prefer going with me to the Rectory, where you will find some cold beef and some good ale."

I leave the result of his hearers' decision to the imagination of the reader.

One of our favourite places of meeting, although one of the most distant, was Cowper's Oak, on the confines of

Salcey Forest. There, one proud day, I proceeded on a small hack, which I exchanged for a splendid black hunter glorying in the name of "Midnight," and thence, after a quick find, we had a magnificent run extending almost to the town of Higham Ferrers.

How many years have passed since that eventful day, eventful at least in my annals, when Lord Alford, beside whom I rode, invited me to luncheon at Castle Ashby, and offered himself as my guide across country.

I gladly accepted with my two companions, Lord Charles Fitzroy and Mr Smith, and then for the first time I saw that beautiful house whose golden gates have so often since that day been opened to afford me a hearty welcome. My beloved friend, Lady Marian Alford, was then doing the honours of her father's home, and many and many a laugh have we had in later days, respecting the wild and dishevelled appearance which a very high wind and very strong exercise had wrought in my person. Nay, I remember well that she made on the spot a slight sketch of the scanty portion of my habit which I had been able to rescue from the encroachments of numerous fences. We were twenty-two miles from home, and my kind hosts pressed the loan of their brougham upon me, an offer which I indignantly and ungratefully refused, scorning to abandon my two fellow-sportsmen on their homeward journey. The next day we three traced our long ride on the ordnance maps, and some amusement was excited in the household when it was announced that the groom, whom Lord Southampton had lent me for the occasion, sent word to enquire, the next morning, after the

small lady who had ridden sixty-seven miles between breakfast and dinner.

Before concluding this slight sketch of the happy days I passed at Whittlebury Lodge, which extended over many years, I am tempted to insert a short anecdote, proving how easily fame may be established in some cases. My maid told me that the housekeeper had informed her that Mr Jones, the valet, was so excellent a musician that he was constantly sent for into the drawing-room to perform before the company. His proficiency consisted in pumping the organ for the lady of the house, who was a very good performer on that instrument. We had indeed some excellent musicians and superior vocalists in our society, and the following is a slight record of the way we passed our time—

SONG

"Call back the days that fled too fast
In mellow autumn's prime,
Like our own light skiff they glided past
Upon the waves of time.

"Call back the hours, those gladsome hours,
The song, the jest, the glee,
The perfume of the lingering flowers,
Sweet summer's legacy.

"The hunter's horn at early morn,
Proclaimed its welcome sound,
And each forest glade an answer made,
With joyous echo round.

"And when the shades of evening fell,
And day's glad toil was o'er,
Then music with its genial spell,
The senses captive bore.

"While every breast the charm confessed,
That bound the willing ear,
And eyes now bright in beauty's light
Were glistening with a tear.

"Call back those hours, thou hast the art,
Thy melody can raise,
And for a time beguile the heart
With thoughts of other days."

CHAPTER XX

MUNICH—SECOND VISIT TO ITALY

WE passed the summer of 1846 at Munich, we—that is my mother, my brother Charles, and my sister—having taken a clean and comfortable lodging kept by a Frenchman in the Promenade Gasse. Our life here was most enjoyable; the inseparable companionship of my brother Charles was to me a source of untold delight. Our pursuits and pleasures were all in common; we studied the German language together under the tuition of a well-read and accomplished master, and gained great proficiency by our almost daily visits to the theatre. I say daily, because the performance began at an early hour, and often ended before the daylight had waned, leaving us at liberty to accompany my mother in her evening drive, or to spend some hours at a friend's house before retiring to rest. The dramatic performances—which comprised many of the masterpieces of Schiller, Kotzebue and Iffland, and other eminent writers—were very well given, and the principal actor and actress of the day were a very handsome and talented couple of the name of Dahl. He took the leading part in such characters as Karl von Moor, in *The Robbers*, and the like, while

his pretty wife showed to great advantage in the heroines of the same pieces, and was very much admired, especially by the king, Ludwig of Bavaria, on whom the charms of female beauty were never thrown away.

The tragedies and comedies at the theatres were alternated with opera by both German and Italian composers, and Charles and I seldom missed an evening in the box which was kindly placed at our disposal by the Sardinian Minister.

We became also zealous students of art in our daily visits to the painting and sculpture galleries of that city of treasures, known by the names of Pinacothek and Glyptothek. We passed most of our mornings in these two museums, where the paintings are well arranged to mark the progress of the art, and where every facility is afforded for the study of the different schools and different periods. I think, before I left Munich I knew every statue and picture by heart.

Whatever King Louis' failings may have been, he was certainly a benefactor to his capital, encouraging art and artists of all degrees, painters, architects, musicians—a builder of palaces, of churches, a patron of the coloured glass for which Munich was so distinguished in his day, and to which was due a revived taste for painted windows in every part of Europe.

The king's own palace was decorated by frescoes representing scenes from the "Niebelungen Lied," and other subjects both of history and fiction by such well-known artists as Cornelius and Kaulbach, while two rooms were set apart for the portraits of contemporary beauties. Not

a few of these were rather of a shady reputation, but then there was a sprinkling of homely-featured Royalties and other exemplary members of society, designed to lend a respectable colouring to the whole.

An amusing story was told of His Majesty, with respect to this gallery. King Louis was partial to the society of foreigners, and invariably included the English in all invitations to his receptions. A lady was presented to him one evening, and being very much struck with her personal appearance, he requested her to be so good as to give the Court portrait painter a sitting a few days hence, as he was desirous of having her portrait in his collection. The lady smiled and hesitated, but we all know what comes of hesitation. Half flattered, half alarmed, not quite convinced of the prudence of the acquiescence, she demurred for a few moments, when vanity prevailed, and our countrywoman gave her consent. The next day the king—walking as was his wont unattended through the streets of his capital—encountered the lady, who was bent on a sight-seeing expedition. He paused, took off his hat, and made some casual remark, which gave him time to examine the beauty of the preceding evening. After an earnest scrutiny of her countenance, His Majesty stammered out a species of apology to the effect that he would not trouble her to give a sitting to his painter in ordinary. Alas! for the disillusion which daylight had brought about with regard to the candle-light beauty!

There were no end of stories extant about Louis of Bavaria. I was assured that on the morning of his silver

wedding, after presenting his wife with the usual offerings of flowers, jewels, and what not, after joining in the religious ceremony, which is very touching and impressive in the German Church, the devoted husband gave the wife so black an eye that it was a question if she could possibly appear at the evening reception.

During the summer most of the society are absent from the capital, and reside at their country estates, so that there were not many houses which "received," as the phrase was, during the hot season, but the one which we constantly frequented made up to us for the absence of any other. It was that of the Sardinian Minister, whose acquaintance we had already made at Genoa. The Marchese Fabio Pallavicini and his wife Marinetta, with their two sons, formed in themselves a most attractive foundation for the agreeable reunions which were at this time swelled by the officers of the neighbouring camp at Augsburg, and a frequent contingent of travellers passing through on their way to the South.

Andri and Cesari, the two sons, had been my frequent partners and members of our Genoese cavalcade, and it was a source of great pleasure to meet them again, and to make an expedition, as we did one day, in their company to see the review which the king was to hold at Augsberg.

The street of that town, which has so often been described as one of the most picturesque in Europe, was beautifully decorated on that occasion, for the houses actually looked as if they had been built in flowers. We lingered on till late in the night, and escorted by some military friends—one of whom, the noble and handsome

Count Karl von Oetting, still lives in my memory—we visited the whole camp and listened to the beautiful part-singing of the troops as they sat at the doors of their tents beneath the glorious moonlight of a July evening.

I, for one, was very sorry when that peaceful summer came to an end—and yet how could I say so when our next destination was Rome! And what a journey that was! never to be forgotten, in its beauty, its brilliancy.

Pope Gregory XVI. had just died, and was succeeded by the popular and liberal Pontiff, Pius the Ninth, on whose accession all prison doors flew open, all political offenders were released, and a festival of three days was announced through every town in the Papal dominions.

Our journey from Munich lay by the twin lakes of Tegern and Aachen, small but beautiful, their banks studded with a profusion of wild-flowers, and the waters of the last-mentioned of a very peculiar hue—what in old days was called mazarine blue or green—and the light caught by the water gave the lake the appearance of a gem—a chrysolite for instance.

When we reached the Italian frontier, our progress assumed an aspect of triumph, for it was vintage time, and we were constantly encountering peasants in the gayest dresses, driving wine-carts with casks and skins full of ruddy liquor, the drivers carrying branches of vine and ivy, as if Bacchus held high revelry. On our arrival at Ravenna, besides the magnificence of the churches and basilica, with their wealth of mosaic and their pride of tradition, there was the interest of a pilgrimage to the tomb of Dante, and it would have been impossible to see Ravenna under a

more bewitching aspect, for it was the three-days' festival. Every house in the principal street had its balcony adorned with rich silks, tapestry, and velvet, not unfrequently embroidered with gold, while all the citizens were in gala dress, and the women, remarkable for personal beauty and dignity of bearing, had donned their richest garb and displayed their choicest ornaments of gold and silver, their magnificent hair transfixed by bodkins, or spadini (of the sword and target shape), many of them wearing innumerable rows of pearls round their stately throats. Even in those days the national costume had been much tampered with, but nothing was too good to do honour to their beloved Pontiff, and the jewel-boxes of every household had been ransacked for the occasion. All along our road the same scene presented itself, making allowance, of course, for the difference of locality.

We spent a morning of exquisite delight in the pine-forest in the neighbourhood of Ravenna. Alas! I hear with deep concern that the chief part of those magnificent trees is mouldering to decay. I remember sitting at my mother's feet for several hours, drinking in the calm and beauty of the scene, while Shelley's lines rose to my lips in his description of another Pineta, the one at Pisa—

> "How calm it was! The silence there
> By such a chain was bound,
> That even the busy Woodpecker
> Made stiller by her sound
> The unviolable quietness;
> The breath of peace we drew,
> With its soft motion made not less
> The calm that round us grew."

There was a distant sound of the Adriatic, which mingled with the whisper of the wind among the stone pines, and produced a weird music, forming a species of scale, caused by the trees being all of the same form, though of different altitudes. Numbers of wild-flowers studded the ground, and moths and butterflies of variegated colours skimmed and floated around us. How often did my mother and myself talk over that delicious morning, when

> "Banished from those Southern climes,
> We thought and spake of other times."

CHAPTER XXI

ARRIVAL IN ROME, 1846—OCTOBER FESTIVALS AND "POSSESSO"

BUT let me hasten on to Rome, where, on our arrival, we took up our abode in a charming apartment in Palazzetto Torlonia, at the corner of the Piazza di Venezia, than which a more excellent situation could scarcely be found, with the full prospect of enjoyment of every kind, social and intellectual. Our hopes brought no disappointment in their train. October in Rome is a season of great beauty, especially when the citizens look forward to the Festivals.

We crossed the Tiber on a glorious day in October, and arrived at the iron gates of the Queen of Villas, over the entrance of which the Eagle of the Dorias surmounted the Lily of the Pamfili. What a gay, smiling scene was before us in that garden, enlightened by fountains, rich in shady woods and plantations, and crowned by the Palace with its spacious terraces! What sounds of joy, what shouts of laughter on all sides! Groups of young girls, dressed chiefly in white, with coloured ribbons flaunting gaily, their dark hair plaited and braided in a manner purely classical, and crowned with fantastic wreaths of natural ivy and wild-flowers, sang in chorus as they walked hand-in-hand,

or tripped backwards and forwards, with one arm thrown round the waist of a companion, and the other flourishing the jingling tambourine high above their heads. Occasionally when two groups met they challenged each other, and then, with many expressions of civility, a circle would be formed, and, after much pressing, and many modest refusals, the two best performers would begin dancing, and setting and wheeling round each other with that occasional bound in the air which gives the name of *saltarello* to their dance.

There were few men in proportion, and those chiefly kept aloof, although a gayer jacket than usual, or even a feather in the hat, showed that all the *minenti* had not arrived without an escort. Staid matrons might be seen looking on—women, not unfrequently, of majestic beauty (beauties of a proud, stern character)—their luxuriant hair confined by nets of rich and variegated colour, or broad loose ribbons, forming a most picturesque kind of coronet.

There seems little doubt that the origin of these Festivals can be traced to the Bacchanalia of Classical Rome, and the Trasteverini girls (for most of the dancers came from the further side of the Tiber) bore no little resemblance to the Mænads of old, with their dishevelled hair crowned by the emblematic ivy and vine leaf. With their proverbial pride they considered no title high enough to content them but *eminente* (or *minente*.)

It would be difficult to describe the excitement which prevailed in the Eternal City pending the eventful moment when Rome's beloved Pontiff was to take possession of the Church of S. John Lateran, a function which answers to

the Sacre of the French monarch, or the Coronation of the English. Pio Nono was at that moment the most popular sovereign in Europe, and he commenced his reign in a most auspicious manner. Liberal in his views, patriotic in aspirations for his beloved country, practically religious as became a priest, he had brought golden opinions with him from the See of Imola, where he had been Bishop. Of courteous and winning manners, witty and agreeable in conversation, a delightful companion, a charitable patron, His Holiness seemed calculated to become, as was indeed the case, a favourite with all sorts and conditions of men. Every morning brought some fresh story of wisdom or of kindness, and as we had a friend at the Papal Court, we were kept *au courant* of what, to us, were interesting details. Once when a certain man on his death-bed had disinherited his wife and children, with whom he was on bad terms, and had left a large sum to the priest who should celebrate his black Mass, the Pope elected to officiate himself. He carried out his plan, and, supplementing the legacy by an addition from his own treasury, he caused an assignment of it to be made to the poor widow, who stood in great need of assistance.

His witty sayings were often quoted, and it was universally believed that many of the answers to the frequent pasquinades which were promulgated at that time were actually prompted by the Pope. Alas! for the bright prospects of those early days and the short-lived popularity which could not be expected to outlast the influence of evil counsellors, who baffled and thwarted him on every occasion! Faltering and vacillating in the noble

path on which he had entered, he disappointed the hopes of those who had hailed his accession with joy. Not only in the grand procession, but on several occasions, and under important and interesting circumstances, had I the joy of seeing him. Once it was on his name-day of San Giovanni, when the Court of the Quirinal was entirely thronged with his subjects, calling out his name, and pleading that he should appear before them. When he did so, and bowed and waved his hands in benediction over the heads of the assembled multitude, how imposing and beautiful the spectacle! Again, at a midnight festival in Santa Maria Maggiore, when he was carried on high, in his crimson chair of state, between the two traditional fans of peacocks' feathers, the sight nearly cost me my life, so dense was the crowd and so imminent the danger to myself and my sister. A third time on the night of Easter Sunday, when the illumination of the whole building of St Peter's, bursting forth into light at one moment, seemed a miracle, for gas was still unfamiliar, and electric light unknown. How well I can recall the scene under the roof of "blue Italian weather" deepening into purple, and studded with stars that glistened and sparkled in the fountains. The magnificent court-yard, encircled with colonnades, peopled by an innumerable concourse who dropped simultaneously on their knees, with an indescribable surging sound, as to the sound of cannon the Pope appeared on the balcony.

But I am anticipating events, and must return to the taking possession of the Lateran, or the "Possesso," as it was called, to which I have before alluded, and the procession

CENTRAL RESERVE

which we saw to perfection from the *secondo piano* of our quarters at Palazzetto Torlonia, happily situated for the purpose. Pio Nono, who had a great taste for all that was picturesque and historical, had conceived the idea of restoring all the splendour of a pageant of the Middle Ages, and being himself a skilful horseman, proposed that carriages should be banished from the procession, which should be entirely composed of horse and foot-men. This unconventional whim, as it was considered, created a great turmoil in the minds of the ecclesiastical dignitaries. The idea of a Pope on horseback shocked the critics of the age, and as many of the Cardinals were well stricken in years, and had probably even in their youth been unaccustomed to mount a horse, the obstacles to the design of His Holiness appeared insurmountable. After manifold *pourparlers*, a compromise was arrived at. The Pope relinquishing his cherished notion of appearing on horseback, was firm in his resolve that his state carriage should be the only one to be found in the procession. Much to their disgust, the whole conclave of Cardinals was appointed to meet the Holy Father, in their respective carriages, at the gates of S. John Lateran.

Never did I see a more orderly, a more picturesque, or a more enthusiastic crowd, than that which lined the Corso, and filled the Piazza di Venezia on the day in question. Although the national costume was even then becoming scarce in the South of Italy, yet on that great day all the citizens on both sides of the Tiber and all the country people from the neighbouring districts, appeared in their holiday clothes of bright and variegated colours.

The red bodice, the floating ribbons, the blue petticoat and white *panno*, well became the majestic beauty of noble-looking women, while the conical hat and coloured sashes of the men recalled the early drawings of Pinelli. One striking personage in the crowd I well remember—a peasant from the district of Nettuno, whose costume had something essentially Oriental in its character. She was a woman of extreme beauty, and of a tall and commanding presence. She wore a garment of crimson silk, in the form of a Turkish pelisse, over a bright gold-coloured robe of the same material; she was evidently the beauty of her native town, and was sent to Rome as its representative.

Soon that mingled murmuring sound which is so well expressed in the Italian language as *bisbiglio* is heard down the length of the Corso, and heralds the approach of the procession. On it comes in all the correct costumes of the Middle Ages, of the exact period which His Holiness has chosen; horsemen in rich doublets of cut velvet and mantles clasped with jewels, the bridle-rein of each held by an attendant, the costliness of whose dress is scarcely inferior to that of the rider. And now, as the crucifer who immediately precedes the carriage of the Holy Father appears in sight, the whole populace fall on their knees. To my mind, the most imposing personage in the whole pageant is the crucifer, a tall and magnificent-looking man, with a long silken beard, carrying a ponderous cross, of such gigantic dimensions that few arms could have been found capable of bearing it, mounted on a splendid white mule, to find which the whole of Italy had been searched. A magnificent spectacle which I shall never forget.

The delights of our winter in Rome were greatly enhanced to my brother Charles and myself by the presence of our dear friend, Adelaide Sartoris, at whose house in the Via Gregoriana we met all that was agreeable and intellectual in the society of Rome. With her and her sister, Fanny Kemble, we took almost daily rides in the Campagna. What enchanting hours of companionship, what exhilarating hours of exercise over that beautiful tract of country, does the mere allusion to those bygone days recall! How swiftly the days passed in the Eternal City! The constant contemplation of the treasures of painting, sculpture and architecture seemed to enrich while it gladdened our minds. All around us beauty—beauty of art, beauty of nature, beauty of sound, of music both sacred and secular! Then the Carnival with its fun and frolic, and the Moccoli; whose twinkling stars still live in the twilight of memory. Rome the beautiful—Rome the eternal—'twas sad to say farewell!

CHAPTER XXII

SUMMER OF 1847—FLORENCE, VILLA CAREGGI

ON our arrival in Florence, we took up our abode on the north side of the Arno, in the same house with our friends the de Fauveaus, and many a delightful hour did I pass in Félicie's studio, watching her beautiful work with deep interest, and sometimes reading aloud to her the works of our best authors, for she was as good an English scholar as I was, although she could not often be tempted to converse in our language. But we did not stay long under the same roof, for it had been arranged that our summer should be spent in Villeggiatura.

Lord Holland, who then possessed the beautiful villa of Careggi de Medici, in the immediate neighbourhood of Florence, kindly placed it at my mother's disposition for the summer months of the year 1847, and when I look back upon the time we passed there, a dream of beauty, peace and happiness rises up before me, surrounded by the golden haze of memory and regret. The villa, which is in itself a palace, is situated in a charming garden, and the interior contains spacious and lofty apartments, and, at the time of which I am speaking, had just been embellished by frescoes from the master hand of our countryman

George Watts, the illustrious Academician. One in particular, at the entrance of the villa, attracted especial notice. It represented the attack made by the servants of Lorenzo the Magnificent on the physician who attended their beloved master in his last hours, and whom they suspected of wilful neglect, or culpable designs on the life of the august prince. The moment chosen by the painter was that in which the retainers seized upon the medical attendant and ruthlessly cast him into the well, which then still existed in the court of the villa. The artist in question, a friend of Lord Holland, was a resident of Careggi when we arrived and most unwillingly drove him away. Assuredly there was room for us all, and many more, in that large and spacious house, but our painter had that love for solitude and that distaste for the society of strangers so frequently to be found in the artistic nature. He had betaken himself to a pavilion in the garden, and courteously but firmly withstood for a time all our advances at nearer companionship. I well remember writing what I considered a coaxing note, asking him to dine with us on Ash Wednesday, as I knew it was more to his taste to fast than to feast. Slowly and gradually we won our way towards his friendship, and, as I once afterwards told him laughingly, how proud I felt when by degrees he grew tame and would eat out of my hand. From that time we have been friends, and I watched with pride and pleasure his rising fame, and gazed with increasing admiration of years on his splendid creations. Our household was a curious medley. Our family consisted of my mother, my sister, my brother Charles and myself,

with our three English servants—the faithful Henry and the two lady's-maids. The domestics we found in the villa were as follows: the porter (an old soldier) and the gardener and his family, the *babbo*, the *mama*, the son and two daughters good, excellent people—the eldest girl Amalia a little hump-back, or *gobbina*, with a tender heart and loving eyes, her sister Violante—always selected on the occasion of any *festa* or procession to take the principal part therein, on account of her extreme beauty.

The two mothers became great friends, notwithstanding their respective ignorance of each other's language, but it was touching to see them sitting side by side in the garden, teaching each other Italian and English names for the different flowers, which the *mama* brought in handfuls and deposited on the lap of the "cara e buona miladi."

The old gardener, with gentle manners and calm exterior, who rented the garden, but would never let us pay a *soldo* for the beautiful nosegays he showered on us, was a real Italian at heart. On one occasion, the gardener of a neighbouring villa, Salviati, had brought a large present of choice flowers to my mother, from our friend Mrs Vansittart. This circumstance so raised the ire of the rival functionary at Careggi, that it was with great difficulty that our English servant interposed to appease the *babbo*, for, as he told me afterwards, he saw the moment when knives were likely to be drawn. The porter, old Pietro, had been, as I said before, a soldier, and was a great character in his way. He would sometimes pace the terrace with me, and not only discuss, but quote long extracts from Dante. Like many other scholars and

students of the divine poet, he found the greatest delight in the story of Francesca di Rimini, and he delivered it as his emphatic opinion that her punishment was immeasurably too severe for her fault. I think I should have to wait some time before an English hall-porter, or domestic servant of any class, would be likely to discuss with me the characteristics of one of Shakespeare's heroines.

This reminds me of an incident related by my dear friend, Lady Marian Alford. She was coming out of the Cathedral at Siena, and talking of the lines in Dante which commemorate the sad fate of "La Pia." She had got as far as "Siena mi fè," when she paused and hesitated, being unable to remember the rest of the line, when a little street Arab, or *gamin*, came to her assistance and completed the sentence, "disfeci mi Maremma," to the satisfaction of both. But we must not wander from Careggi and the golden summer we passed there.

The windows were scrupulously closed during the intense heat of the day, but between the hours of four and five they were flung wide open to admit the refreshing air, and then we would sit in the garden, or walk, or drive, interchanging visits, and offering or accepting invitations from the neighbouring villas, or sometimes from dwellers in the city.

From the *loggia* at Careggi, where we used to spend a great part of our evenings, watching the lights which starred the city, inhaling the perfumes of the orange flowers, and delighting in the erratic flights of those embodied stars, the fire-flies, we commanded the windows of the Villa Quarto, inhabited by our Swedish friend, the Comtesse Pipa and

her nephew, Eric Baker, with whom we had invented a code of signals, and by displaying some scarlet or yellow drapery, understood at once if an invitation to dinner was refused or accepted.

On the opposite side, but at a greater distance, stood the Villa Salviati, inhabited by a beautiful countrywoman of ours, Mrs Vansittart before-mentioned, the tall and stately chatelaine of that magnificent house afterwards purchased by Mario and Grisi, and which, I believe, still bears the name of the former. Many delightful evenings were spent beneath Mrs Vansittart's roof, where Charles and I were frequent guests. I remember once when he and I had done our best to amuse our hosts with a *ballet d'action* on a small scale, at the conclusion of which I was nearly smothered by the profusion of flowers which were lavished upon me from that fertile garden. Oh yes, and I remember only too vividly the homeward walk with that beloved companion, across a short cut, all hedged and fringed with cypress and ilex, glistening and sparkling in the silver radiance of a Tuscan moonlight.

That was an eventful period in the lives of both, for, during that summer Charles's destiny became entwined with that of a young English lady whose acquaintance he had made the previous winter at Rome, and who with her widowed mother was a constant visitor at the Villa Careggi. Indeed, before the end of the summer, my dear brother was engaged to be married to Miss Moore, the daughter of General Sir Lorenzo Moore, late Governor of the Ionian Islands, in commemoration of which office he had bestowed on his daughter the somewhat strange though

musical name of Zacyntha. The lovers were separated for the winter, but on their return to England, in the year 1849, they were united, and my brother gained a devoted and faithful wife, even to his life's end, and she became the mother of a large family of noble and beautiful children.

During our stay at Careggi we kept open house. Numerous friends and acquaintances, *en route* for Florence or Rome, flocked from all parts to find a hearty welcome from the English occupants of that historical palace, so intimately bound up with memories of the palmy days of Florence and her merchant princes; while the neighbours from the villas before-mentioned often frequented our charming gardens of an evening. Amongst our visitors was Prince Anatole Demidoff (so well known in Florence as one of the chief leaders of society), afterwards the husband of Princess Mathilde, the sister of Prince Napoleon, who gave splendid receptions at his own villa of San Donato.

I was much amused by an anecdote which was related to me as having happened some years before the time of which I am speaking. Prince Demidoff was very hospitable to foreigners, and an English lady having received an invitation to a *soirée* at this villa, arrayed herself in the best ornaments contained in her jewel-box, which were not of a very costly description. It was at a time when, in England at least, malachite was very much used, not only for table ornaments, such as ink-stands and paper-weights, but also occasionally for brooches, earrings, and the like, or what then were called *sevignés*. Thus decorated, our countrywoman took her way to Prince Demidoff's recep-

tion, but her consternation was great when, on entering the noble suite of apartments, she found that the chimney-pieces, the consoles, and the very doors themselves were constructed of the identical material which formed her *parure.*

During our stay at Careggi, I had provided myself with an independent little vehicle in which I drove occasionally into Florence, to pay a visit to Félicie de Fauveau. I was invariably stopped at the gate of the city, and interrogated by a pompous official as to whether I had anything contraband to declare. "Oh dear yes," said I one day, impatient at being delayed, "two apricots and a book," which reply made my driver laugh aloud. My coachman was a bright young fellow who rejoiced in the classical name of Œdipus. He had been educated at a Jesuit school, and spoke his native language with great purity, and even eloquence. It is certainly remarkable to listen to the choice selection of words used by the lower classes in Tuscany. The common saying of "lingua Toscana in bocca Romana," is strikingly true, for the guttural pronunciation of the Florentines—inherited doubtless from the Spaniards—contrasts disadvantageously with the soft, so to speak, languishing, cadence of the Roman dialect.

I made a delightful little expedition in my own *carretella* to the Baths of Casciano, near Pisa, to pay a visit of two days to Félicie de Fauveau and her mother. It was a whole day's journey, and we halted half-way, if I remember right, at the picturesque, fortified old town, to bait our little stout Calabrian pony. I found Œdipus a delightful travelling companion, for he knew the history and the

legends of the country through which we passed, and I was quite sorry to bid him good-bye, for it was settled I should return with my friends.

Casciano is a picturesque spot, whose baths were at one time in great repute, and the legend connected with the discovery of its boiling springs interested me not a little. The Empress Matilda, it would appear, who was devoted to the sport of hawking, possessed a falcon of uncommon skill and beauty, whose constant perch was on the Imperial wrist. Suddenly the favourite began to droop and shed its feathers, and to show signs of some malady more severe than the usual moulting of birds. Unable to carry on its vocation or to join in its beloved mistress's cherished sport, the poor falcon hung its head, disfigured and ashamed. One morning the bird was missing, and could not be traced, and much surprise was expressed that the diminished pinions should have had sufficient strength to ensure its flight. Time passed, and the "tasset gentle" was supplanted but not replaced in the heart of the royal sportswoman. But one day, when on a grand hawking expedition, the Empress had just let fly her falcon in search of its quarry—lo! a miracle: perching on her wrist, pluming itself, and nodding and bowing, with all the grace of which a bird can be capable, and all the loyalty of a devoted subject, was the long lost one. A recurrence of the falcon's indisposition, and a restlessness which seemed to foretell an inclination to absent itself once more, caused the Empress to issue her commands that the bird should be watched. It seems difficult to imagine how her wishes were carried out, but we must suppose that the will of that

Imperial lady was omnipotent. At all events, the story goes (and who would question so romantic a legend) that the winged invalid was found bathing in the warm springs of Casciano, and after this voluntary cure, found its way back in renovated health and plumage to the Court of its noble mistress, thereby laying claim to being the founder and patron of the baths in question.

Oh! it is hard, even in retrospective thought, to tear one's self away from those blissful days which were prolonged late into the autumn, when the Apennines so often assume that rich colouring of Imperial purple, illumined by golden sunlight, which adds fresh lustre to the environs of Florence. To that city we made our next move, and took up our abode in a house in the Santa Croce quarter, between which and the Casa Fenzi, in Piazza Santa Maria Novella, where Lady Moore and her daughter were now located, there was constant intercourse, until the *sposa* and her mother left for Rome, and my brother Charles took his departure for England.

CHAPTER XXIII

RESIDENCE IN FLORENCE—CHARLES LEVER—REVOLUTION, AND THE BROWNINGS

OUR new residence in Florence consisted of a very pretty apartment on the ground floor of the Casa Lagerschwerd, opening on a bright little garden, which was a perfect sun-trap, and where, even on cold days, my dear mother could bask in safety. We had not been there very long ere I received a letter from our friend G. P. R. James, recommending his friend, the bearer, Charles Lever, to our especial notice.

Him he thus describes: — "One of the most genial spirits I ever met; his conversation is like summer lightning—brilliant, sparkling, but harmless. In his wildest sallies I never heard him give utterance to an unkind thought."

The old advice, "If you like his works, do not make acquaintance with the author," would have been misplaced as regards him. He essentially resembled his works, and whichever you preferred, that one was most like Charles Lever. He was the complete type and model of an Irishman—warm-hearted, witty, rollicking, of many metres in his pen, but never unrefined, imprudent and often blind

to his own interests—adored by his friends, the playfellow of his children and of the gigantic boar-hound he had brought from Tyrol.

I well remember his first visit, his chivalrous, deferential manner to my mother, and the hearty, cordial way in which he claimed my friendship. He gave me a most amusing description of his entry into Florence, with his three children, two girls and a boy, with whom he had performed the journey from the Tyrol on horseback. They had spent the summer among hardy mountaineers, and had imbibed many of the tastes, and had adopted the greater part of the costume of the Tyrolese—such as the conical-shaped hat with its golden cord and peacocks' feathers. Altogether, his appearance, with that of his young companions, followed by their brindled boarhound, attracted great attention as they passed slowly through the Porto San Gallo. The crowd which gathered round them were impressed by the belief that they formed part of a company of a circus or hippodrome, and Charles Lever, in great glee, even assured me that he had been accosted on his road with a view to an engagement. Our first interview, on the whole, was most satisfactory, and all the more so when my new friend informed me that he had rented Casa Standish for the winter, and that he counted upon me to resume the post of *prima donna*, which he had heard, so ran his courteous words, "I had already filled with so much honour."

It did not take Charles Lever long to be installed as tenant of Casa Standish, manager and lessee of the little theatre; and then began a series of rehearsals

and dramatic representations, the frequent reunion of kindred spirits, the merry suppers and joyous dances in which my soul delighted. Our company was excellent and foremost in the troupe, and in my recollection, since we generally played the two leading characters of the "Juvenile Caste," was Captain Elliott, who, with his charming wife, was located for the time in an apartment in Piazzi Pitti. Good-looking, graceful in deportment, courteous in manner, with great flexibility of countenance, Captain Elliott was well qualified to play first lover, although he occasionally condescended to take a part in low comedy. We shared some bright laurels on several occasions, especially in two or three detached scenes from the *School for Scandal*, particularly in the famous Screen scene; Captain Elliott distinguished himself as "Joseph Surface," while our host and lessee gave a decided and Irish colouring to the reckless humour of his namesake "Charles." But the latter was still more in his element in the then favourite farce of *The Irish Tutor*, a part lately rendered famous by the impersonation of Tyrone Power, the best "Irishman" that ever walked, or rather tripped, the stage—he whose untimely fate made so deep an impression on the lovers of the drama, when all hope was relinquished of the safety of that vessel in which he had been a joyous passenger. Charles Lever was no unworthy rival in the character of "Doctor O'Toole," and the jig which we danced together laid good claim to be called an "Everlasting," its duration being so prolonged by repeated plaudits of the audience.

Dear old friend! We met twice again after a separa-

tion of many years, once, as a glad surprise, when arriving rather late for dinner, I turned round and found him as my neighbour at one of those delightful banquets at Charles Dickens' table, where all that was eminent in Literature and Art, or endowed with social and intellectual gifts, was sure to find a place and a welcome.

In the year 1870, during the first Viceroyalty of Earl Spencer in Ireland, Lever paid a visit to Dublin,[1] where he made friends with my nephew Courtenay Boyle, and was a frequent and welcome visitor at the Castle and Viceregal Lodge. From Ireland he came to London, and I had the pleasure of entertaining him at my little house in South Audley Street, where Lady Spencer gladly agreed to meet him. On the table lay a volume of Bret Harte's parodies[2] of popular novelists, and I, volunteering to read a passage aloud, asked if he could recognise the authorship. It was the narrative of a cavalry officer who, in the heat of an engagement, took a flying, but unwilling, leap over a

[1] I well remember this visit and the many chats we had about his novel, "Lord Kilgobbin," then on the stocks.

[2] The parody was "Terence Deuville"—"Putting spurs to my horse I rode at him boldly, and with one bound cleared him, horse and all. A shout of indignation arose from the assembled staff. I wheeled suddenly, with the intention of apologising, but my mare misunderstood me, and again dashing forward, once more vaulted over the head of the officer, this time, unfortunately, uncovering him by a vicious kick of her hoof. 'Seize him!' roared the entire army. I was seized. As the soldiers led me away, I asked the name of the gray-haired officer. 'That?—why that's the Duke of Wellington!' I fainted."

A somewhat similar episode is recorded in another parody, the fighting "Onet y Oneth," by W. M. Thackeray, written many years before Bret Harte (who, I am sure, was no plagiarist) wrote "Terence Deuville."

horseman in a dark cloak, cocked hat and white feathers. As far as I can remember the words—"My horse cleared the obstacle well, I lifted my eyes, and found myself for the first time in the presence of Field-Marshal The Duke of Wellington!"

Never shall I forget Lever's burst of laughter, which seemed to flood the whole room with sunshine. "Upon me soul, I believe it's meself; it's uncommonly like me." That was the last time we ever met. The wife to whom he was deeply attached died shortly afterwards, and Charles Lever did not long survive her.

That was an eventful time for Florence, for Italy, for the whole of Europe. The spirit of revolution was abroad, and France had set a startling example to other nations. In the month of February, 1848, the Carnival was at its height, and the youth, beauty and fashion of Florence were assembled in a splendid ball-room in one of her principal palaces. I was sitting beside my dear friend Félicie de Fauveau, who had been rebuking me for dancing with *cette canaille*—for so she designated Baron Ward, Prime Minister and ex-groom of the Duke of Parma —and I had excused myself on the ground that it amused me to become acquainted with celebrities — perhaps, in this case, I had better have said notorieties—when we were all startled by the rapid entrance of a stranger. There was a pause, a hush, and then he became the centre of a little crowd that gathered round him, evidently the bearer of some strange intelligence. Félicie and I rose together to inquire the cause. It was soon told—a Revolution in France, and Louis Philippe and his whole

family driven from the capital. To my companion, the news was of deep interest, for was she not devoted heart and soul to the cause of Henri Cinq? In that assembly, which contained many nationalities among the company, the intelligence was listened to with varying degrees of excitement, pleasure or indifference, while to the younger portion of the community, who cared little for the destiny of kings and governments, the paramount thought was that the *bal masqué* at the French Embassy would not take place.

The downfall of the Orleans dynasty naturally led to a renewal of hope among the more devoted and sanguine of the Legitimists, which proved, however, but short-lived. One morning, soon after the ball already alluded to, Félicie de Fauveau called upon me and asked if I could undertake a commission for her. Any messenger she could send, she explained to me—indeed, any Frenchman or Frenchwoman who was the bearer of a letter to the Duchesse de Berri—would be an object of suspicion. "Have you any fellow-countryman whom you could safely trust to carry a communication from me to that Princess?" Most fortunately, a friend of ours, an Englishman, had the day previously expatiated to me on his delight at the prospect of seeing Venice for the first time. I summoned him to our assistance, entrusted Félicie's packet to his care, enjoined prudence and secrecy, and thus, for the first and last time in my life, played the part of conspirator, though, sooth to say, with no important or successful result.

In Florence, where people did not take life *au grand sérieux*, there was no end of chaffing and jesting on the

subject, which could not be said to be a jest to Paris and the Parisians. All the princes and princesses, all the counts and countesses, sometimes good-humouredly, sometimes spitefully, were addressed as *Citoyens* and *Citoyennes*. I heard of an incident at the club, which only just escaped having an unpleasant termination.

A Russian nobleman, who, for some reason or another, was not on good terms with a Frenchman of decided Legitimist tendencies, approached him and, in rather a provocative tone, said, "Bon jour, Citoyen." The Frenchman looked at him with some disdain, and turning on his heel, exclaimed, "Adieu, esclave," which retort elected a laugh from the bystanders.

Meanwhile, as we jested and acted and danced, the Tuscan Revolution was proceeding slowly on its course. The Grand Duke[1] whose reign had been marked by a mild paternal sway, and who was as popular as an Austrian well could be in those anti-Austrian days, endeavoured at first to make a compromise with the Tuscans by granting them a charter for the Civic Guards. This was made an occasion of great rejoicing in the city, and the Italians, who always turn a festivity into a pageant, organised a procession, which defiled for the space of three hours beneath the windows of the Palazzo Pitti, where, on the balcony, Leopold II. appeared, surrounded by his family. It was not to be expected that he should wear a very cheerful aspect, for although the air rang with *vivas*, in recognition of his Civic grant, and although he affected to advocate the cause of United Italy, yet it was easy to

[1] Leopold II., died at Rome, 1870.

know that the compact between the Prince and the people was hollow and fragile, and that "Leopoldo essendo straniero," must sooner or later come under the cry for the expulsion of the foreigner.

On the morning appointed for the procession in question, I went, accompanied by my sister and my future sister-in-law, to a house in the Piazza Pitti, the name of which has now become classical; for the walls of Casa Guidi bear a tributary inscription to the memory of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who, with the "heart of a woman, the knowledge of a professor, and the spirit of a poet, formed a link between Italy and England." These are Florence's grateful words to our English poetess, and well did she deserve the tribute, for no one ever participated more cordially in the aspirations of Italy's future, or gave utterance to those aspirations in so musical a form.

I would gladly transcribe *verbatim* the lines in which that noble spirit described the scene I witnessed, in her dear company, and that of her husband, from Casa Guidi windows; for how cold and colourless must my words appear compared with her surpassing eloquence. But space will not allow of the whole transcript, and I therefore unwillingly confine myself to fragments—

"The day was such a day
As Florence owes the sun. The sky above,
Its weight upon the mountains seemed to lay,
And palpitate in glory, like a dove
Who has flown too fast, full-hearted—take away
The image! for the heart of man beat higher
That day in Florence, flooding all her streets
And piazzas with a tumult and desire.

How we gazed
From Casa Guidi windows while, in trains
Of orderly procession, banners raised,
And intermittent bursts of martial strains
. . . they passed on!
The Magistracy, with insignia, passed, . . .
And all the people shouted in the sun,
And all the thousand windows which had cast
A ripple of silks in blue and scarlet down
(As if the houses overflowed at last),
Seemed growing larger with fair heads and eyes.
The Lawyers passed . . .
The Priesthood passed. . . . Next were viewed
The Artists; next, the Trades; and after came
The People. . . .
And very loud the shout was for that same
Motto, 'Il popolo'—'IL POPOLO.'
And next, with banners, each in his degree,
Deputed representatives a-row,
Of every separate State of Tuscany:
Siena's she-wolf, bristling on the fold
Of the first flag, preceded Pisa's hare,
And Massa's lion floated calm in gold,
Pienza's following with his silver stare,
Arezzo's steed pranced clear from bridle-hold?"

Then followed a concourse of foreigners of all nations, lovers of Italy—

"Oh heaven, I think that day had noble use
Among God's days!"

And so it had, for that day was a forerunner of better days to come, though many a reverse was in store for the House of Savoie, and many a check was to be given to the brave Sardinians in the battle-field. Still, that day, commemorated by our English poetess, shadowed forth

the time when the King of Sardinia became the King of Italy, and Imperial Rome the capital of his kingdom.

And now that I have had occasion to speak of that poet pair, the Brownings, let me recall the hours of enchantment which I passed beneath their roof. I was the bearer of a letter from a common friend, and well do I remember knocking at the door, which was opened to me by the poet in person. How kindly they received me! how truly they welcomed me, stranger as I was, whose very name was unknown to them. How one-sided seemed the advantages of that acquaintance; for I had known and loved them long, and when I went up to the sofa where the poetess lay, half bird, half spirit, as a loving hand described her, I felt inclined to address her by the name of "Bar," the pet name of her own sweet poem, which her brother gave her

> "When we were children 'twain,
> When names acquired baptismally
> Were hard to utter as to see
> That life had any pain."

And there on her lap was her dog "Flush," with whom I was so well acquainted in verse. The pale, thin hand of his mistress resting on the glossy head of that "gentle fellow-creature" like a benediction.

All seemed familiar to me from the first moment, and all became truly familiar to me soon, and now remains a sacred memory. I have never in the course of my life seen a more spiritual face, or one in which the soul looked more clearly from the windows; clusters of long curls, in a fashion now obsolete, framed in her small

delicate face, and even shrouded its outline, and her form was so fragile as to appear but an ethereal covering.

I had looked forward eagerly to the moment when I should lay these pages of affectionate remembrance before my friend Robert Browning, when, alas! the news came from Venice of his unexpected death, and baulked me of the pleasure of doing so—a disappointment which added to the poignancy of my regret at his loss.

My visits to Casa Guidi were daily, or rather nightly, for my mother's health at this time compelled her to retire early to rest; and the moment I had bidden her good-night, I would fly to Casa Guidi and spend the early evening, or *prima sera*, as the Italians call it, with my poets. How delightful were those moments—how swiftly did they pass! how rich was the wit, the wisdom, the knowledge, the fancy, in which I revelled with those dear companions! And then a ring would come at the bell just at the proper moment to save my sweet hostess from fatigue, and I would go downstairs to greet another friend who had kindly allowed me to go into society under her wing. Madame de Manny, to all the vivacity and charm of a Frenchwoman, added some of the dignity and steadiness of the English nature—a rare and valuable combination amid the frivolity and laxity of manners then prevalent in the Florentine capital. The name of de Manny also had a charm for me in the historical associations connected with Froissart and the Carthusian Monastery, for my friend's husband was a lineal descendant of Sir Walter de Manny, or Many, in those famous chronicles.

CHAPTER XXIV

LAST DAYS AT FLORENCE—RETURN TO ENGLAND—MILLARD'S HILL, LONDON 1848.

WHILE we were at Florence the popular mind had become so excited by passing events, by the Revolution in France, and by the outbreaks in the north of Italy, that disturbances on a modified scale were of almost daily occurrence in the streets or on the walls of the city. I was amused one day at a comic manifestation of the Florentine horror of the Austrian by overhearing a peasant who was beating his donkey, cry out to him in a tone of objurgation: "Oh, Maiter Nick-ee—oh, Maiter Nick-ee." I could not but intercede for the poor beast, and represent to his master that he could not well be called a foreigner.

Another time, as I was returning from a drive to a neighbouring villa with my mother, our carriage was stopped and surrounded by some men, who desired us to alight and proceed on foot, as we had no more right to go in a carriage than they had. Their words were menacing, but their looks were by no means threatening, and trusting to the Italian's love of a jest, I told them that it was out of the question for my mother to walk, for she was not strong, and that for myself I did not

care how many miles I walked, but I had on a pair of beautiful new thin boots (in those days we wore a dainty *chaussure* called *brodequins*), and it would break my heart to spoil them in the muddy road. Oh those good-humoured Tuscans! They laughed, shook their heads, bade the coachman drive on, and showed no ill-will to the little foreigner who had turned aside their wrath with a joke.

But on a future day the populace showed itself more violent. I was unwell, and had not left the house, when my brother came back with the news that there had been a riot in the streets, and that on the appearance of my friend Beppa, the florist, the old cry had been raised of "A spy!—a Court spy!" and the poor woman had been hunted down several streets, and was flying in terror for her very life; then came to her rescue, rising as they ever did, as if by magic, in the hour of need, the noble band of the "Misericordia," bound to succour and to protect the sick and the sorrowful. Clad in their black robes, their faces shrouded by their black hoods, they interposed between the pursuers and their victim, and claimed the right, which none durst question, of taking possession of the fugitive. Beppa was sick, she was near her confinement, therefore she came within the jurisdiction of the "Misericordia," who, placing her on the litter they always carry with them, bore her off, not to the hospital, as is usual in such cases, but to a place of safety and secrecy.

I was very much distressed when I heard of the danger my favourite had run, and longed to hear some news of her, which I did a few days later, in rather dramatic manner. I

was walking on the Lung'arno when a little boy approached me. He attracted my attention in a mysterious manner, "'St, 'st, Signorina," he said; "listen to me, but take no notice of me. Beppa salutes you tenderly. She has a beautiful boy; she sends you these flowers," which he smuggled into my hand, "and hopes to see you soon."

Accordingly, in the course of time, our faithful Henry ushered a muffled figure, whose face was completely hidden by the hood of a long cloak, into the drawing-room of Casa Lagerschward. It was Beppa, my Beppa! She flung off her disguise as she clasped me in her arms; she wept, she laughed, she went into rapture over her baby, over her husband—"Che mi vuole un ben di paradiso."[1] It was a spectacle to astonish an undemonstrative Northerner. When the time came for us to leave Florence, Beppa was one of the humble friends whom I regretted most; but oh! how I grieved to say farewell to that beautiful city!

"Oh! rightly, justly named the fair,
There is a magic in thine air,
A gladness in thine atmosphere,
Where floating particles of joy,
With hidden hope the spirits buoy,
And every feeling cheer.

"Fair city of the myriad towers,
How oft my heart will yearn
Towards thee and thine and those dear hours
Which never can return.
No more for me thy suns shall shine,
No more, no more thy flowerets twine
A garland for my brow!"

[1] "Who loves me with the love of heaven," is the only translation I can render of these untranslatable words.

The gardener's family from Careggi came to bid us farewell, and it was only by a violent effort I could wrench myself away from the two weeping sisters, who loaded me with caresses. The separation between the two mothers was more affecting still, for they were both well stricken in years, and knew they could not meet again on this side of the grave. I shall never forget the faithful Italian's tender look as she pressed my mother's hand for the last time to her lips, and exclaimed: "A rivederla in Paradiso." Then there was dear Félicie de Fauveau, of whom to take a sad, and, as it turned out, a lasting farewell, and the good Levers, our friend Charles and his excellent little wife.

Although in the early part of 1848 the whole of Europe was in a state of political turmoil, our travel homeward was unattended by any excitement or adventure. We fell in with no fighting, although we followed closely on its track, and in Milan and many other towns through which we passed we found all inscriptions and insignia in any way connected with Austria, effaced and defaced, while in several streets and thoroughfares were collected groups of citizens, for the most part in fantastic dresses (for Italians generally love to throw a Carnival colouring over all their doings), singing the Italian hymn of *Viva Italia!* and *Viva Pio Nono!* for the name of the Pontiff was still beloved, as he had not repudiated his first principles, or taken his flight to Gaeta yet, neither had his name been superseded in the popular cries by *Viva Garibaldi!*

For myself I was in constant correspondence with one of Charles Albert's most distinguished and confidential officers,

the Cavaliere Pietro de Boÿl, of whom I have already spoken in my chapter on Genoa. He well knew how my brother Charles and I sympathised with his patriotic views for Italy's future, and he would write to me from Turin, or the camp, according to where he was stationed, to enquire news of what was passing in Tuscany, or farther south.

In our passage down the Rhine our steamers carried troops, and I shall never forget the intense delight with which I listened to the beautiful part-singing of those good soldiers. I had just received a treasure from England —it was the novel of "Jane Eyre," at that moment making a great noise in the literary world, and my recollections of that book have been invariably intertwined with the strains of the excellent music to which I listened during its perusal.

When we arrived in London we found it in a ferment of Chartists and special constables; but in spite of the turmoil, we took our quiet way to our little woodland house in Somersetshire, suffering, at least I speak for myself, from the *mal du pays*, for I had got to love and consider Italy as my home.

In the year 1849, my brother Charles and his wife, after a short sojourn with us, embarked for the Cape of Good Hope, where he had obtained an appointment; but there were still "good times in store for me," for, when the season was at its height, I went to London to pay a most delightful visit to my friend Adelaide Sartoris.[1] Her com-

[1] Younger daughter of Charles Kemble, and sister of Frances Anne Butler.

paratively small drawing-rooms in Park Place were the resort of all that was remarkable and superior in Society, whether as to talent or position. The best *artistes* in music, painting, sculpture, or histrionic celebrity, were her frequent and welcome guests, enlivened, as the Society papers would say, by a "sprinkling of beauty, rank and fashion." Here, for the first time, I heard the noble voice of Charles Santley, which I always likened to three-piled crimson velvet, and from that moment I have never met him without pleasure, or listened to him without delight.

Charles Hallé, too, was there, with his exquisite rendering of Mendelssohn, Beethoven, etc., whom I have often told that his playing made me feel good and happy for at least a week; and his kindly, friendly wife, and occasionally, though not at that time out in the world, their eldest daughter, with whom it is still a pleasure to talk of those old days, and who, never forgetting my admiration for her father's talent, includes me in many a kind invitation to profit by it. Here, too, I often met Lord Dufferin, Lord Fordwich,[1] and Frederick Leighton, the tried and trusty friend of the Sartorises, who sang duets with Adelaide in songs of many nations, and whose fame as a painter, although still young, was so firmly established, that his future honours as P.R.A. caused no wonder to his friends or to the public. Here also was an Italian singer, whose simple-minded remark on one occasion caused us great merriment. Ciabatti was a man of great personal beauty,

[1] Francis, sixth Earl Cowper; born 1834; married, 1870, Lady Katrine Compton, daughter of William, fourth Marquess of Northampton.

and I overheard him one evening complaining to Mrs Sartoris that this "dowry," like unto Italia's, had been fatal to him. "I seldom get an engagement," he said, "for the moment the mammas see me, they will not run the risk of the daughters falling in love with me, for, you know, *cara*, I am so very, very handsome!" No idle boast, but the plain unvarnished truth.

During that visit I was in my element—concerts at home and abroad, operas, theatres and dramatic entertainments, in which my hostess and I took part. The Alfred Wigans were our common friends, and it was arranged on one occasion that a representation should be given in the little theatre at Store Street, for the benefit of the above-named distinguished actor. The piece chosen was *The Merry Monarch*, and the caste was as follows:—

CHARLES II.	MR HENRY GREVILLE
EARL of ROCHESTER . . .	MR ALFRED WIGAN
CAPTAIN COPP	MR EDWARD SARTORIS
. . . .	HONBLE. GEORGE BYNG [1]
LADY CLARA	MRS SARTORIS
MARY COPP	MISS MARY BOYLE

the evening concluding with Alfred Wigan's *chef-d'œuvre* of *The First Night*. How well I recall the happy meetings which the rehearsals entailed.

It was a brilliant success financially and socially. The Sartorises at that time had no country house of their own, but it was their habit to hire one, during the summer and autumn months, in different parts of England, where I often visited them, and spent hours of happy intercourse

[1] Afterwards third Earl of Strafford.

with dear Adelaide and her sister Fanny, enjoying the delight of intellectual conversation and genial sympathy.

At Henry Greville's house in Queen Street, where his small and select reunions had all the characteristics of a French *salon*, all the best musicians of the day lent their talents to make the evening attractive in the highest degree; while it was a standing jest among the female friends of our dear host, that their newest toilettes and brightest diamonds were to be worn in his honour.

CHAPTER XXV

ROCKINGHAM CASTLE—CHARLES DICKENS

THE autumn of 1850 marks, indeed, a memorable era in my heart's calendar, for it was then I spoke for the first time with Charles Dickens. He had been my familiar friend, as a writer, for years—since his publication of "Sketches by Boz"—but the day that my conquest was complete was while on a visit to Burghley. My brother Cavendish had secured an odd number of "Pickwick," and coming up to my favourite little room ("Queen Elizabeth's China Closet"), he told me he had a treat in store for me, and then and there read aloud to my enraptured ears a scene where the runaway couple were tracked through the medium of "Sam Weller," who, in his capacity of "Boots" at the hotel, had blacked Mr Jingle's Wellingtons and Miss Wardle's shoes in No. 17. How we laughed! How many interruptions were caused by our frequent shouts! Suffice it to say that from that day forward no page of our beloved author was left unread by either brother or sister, though the time was far distant ere he became the fast friend of both.

Mrs Watson,[1] one of my dear, though not very near,

[1] Lavinia, daughter of Lord George Quin by Lady Georgiana Spencer; married Hon. Richard Watson, fourth son of second Lord Sondes.

cousins, had married the possessor of the grand old castle of Rockingham, situated on one of the few eminences which are to be found in Northamptonshire, the Midlandest of England's counties. That stately old building had originally been a Royal hunting-lodge, and a surrounding domain, still diversified and picturesque in the extreme, had once been forest-land. Some portion of the house itself was of very early date, and the grand entrance, or gate-house, consisting of two massive circular towers, dated as far back as the reign of Stephen.

The interior of Rockingham, the large entrance hall, the gallery and the dining-room, in particular, were especially remarkable for their old-world appearance. In the first of these apartments I loved to read the inscription on the beams of the ceiling—

"Thys House shall be preserved and never shall decaye
While Almighty God is honoured and served daye by daye"—

while the dining-room, with its oak-panelled walls, decorated with innumerable shields of relations and neighbours, blazoned in proper heraldic colours, has a lasting claim on my memory as the scene of our dramatic performances.

The "Chatelaine," to whom I have already alluded, was a daughter of Lord George Quin, with whom I claim cousinship, as her mother was a Spencer. The master of Rockingham was the brother of Lord Sondes, who changed his patronymic of Milles for the name of Watson, on succeeding to the Northamptonshire estate. At Lausanne they had made the acquaintance of the Charles Dickens' family, and, knowing how devout a hero-worshipper I was, had promised to include me among

their invitations the next time that "Boz" became their guest. So one day, to my great delight, I received a letter from Mrs Watson, begging me to come down by rail on a certain day, and to look out at Euston for the Dickens family, who would be my fellow-travellers. Either they were too early, or I was late, and to my great disappointment I missed the pleasure of their company for many stations.

I believe I had proceeded as far as Wolverton, when the guard (who, by the way, was a friend of mine) threw open the door, with the air of a Master of the Ceremonies, and said to me: "This is Mr Charles Dickens, who is enquiring for Miss Boyle!" A hand was held out to help me from the carriage, a hand that for twenty successive years was ever held out to help me in joy or sorrow, that was ever ready to grasp mine in tender friendship or cordial companionship, and whose pressure still thrills my memory. I got into the carriage whence he had descended, where I found his wife and her sister, Georgina Hogarth—alas! the only one of the three who will read this record of our first meeting, and of those delightful days which I passed at Rockingham, in London, and at Gad's Hill, in the company of one whose loss we still devoutly mourn—having the chief part of the whole civilised world to share our grief.

It was difficult for two such lovers of the Drama as Charles Dickens and myself to meet under the same roof, without some dramatic plotting; and so, during that visit, we trod for the first time the same boards together in a hastily-concocted scene from "Nicholas Nickleby"—that

in which the mad neighbour, from the top of the garden wall, makes a passionate declaration to Mrs Nickleby. My shabby-genteel costume, with the widow's cap of the period, attracted universal admiration from its appropriate fitness, while the amorous outbursts of my adorer were given in a manner worthy of the actor-author.

How well I remember going into a cheap shop in Oxford Street to buy that identical widow's cap, of the close, stiff form then in vogue, and purposely selecting one of the commonest, I enquired the price. "Tenpence," said the man, with a tinge of indignation in his tone, which conveyed an undoubted reproach. "I think, ma'am," he said, "that if you are going to make a present of the cap, we have some at eighteenpence that will be more suitable." I so entirely sympathised with his view of the case, or should have done so in ordinary circumstances, that I condescended to explain my professional reasons for selecting so common an article.

This short and impromptu entertainment was only the prelude to theatrical performances on a larger and grander scale.

I may truly say, and I think be forgiven for so saying that the 20th of September, 1850, was a very proud day in my small annals. The morning's post brought me the subjoined letter from the great novelist of the day:—

"Sir E. Bulwer Lytton presents his compliments to Miss Boyle, and hears with great delight from Mr Dickens, that she is kind enough to take a part in the Theatricals at Knebworth, which it is at present proposed should take place October 30th,

"Sir Edward therefore requests to know on what previous day he may calculate on the honour of receiving Miss Boyle's obliging visit.

"KNEBWORTH, STEVENAGE,
"HERTS, 16*th September* 1850."

It was not till after the death of my beloved friend Charles Dickens that I became aware, through the publication of his letters, that it was at his suggestion Sir Edward had made this flattering proposal. In a letter from Broadstairs to Knebworth, he speaks of me in these terms:

"Do you know Mary Boyle, daughter of the old Admiral?—because she is the very best actress I ever saw off the stage, and immeasurably better than a great many I have seen on it. I have acted with her in a country house in Northamptonshire, and am going to do so again next November. If you know her, I think she would be more than pleased to play, and by giving her something good in a farce, we could get her to do "Mrs Kitely." In that case, my little sister-in-law would 'go on' for the second lady, and you could do without actresses, besides giving the thing a particular grace and interest. If we could get Mary Boyle, we would do *Used Up*, which is a delightful piece, as the farce. But maybe you know nothing about the said Mary, and in that case, I should like to know what you would think of doing."

These negotiations resulted in the engagement, which I gladly accepted, to go down to Knebworth and tread the same stage with such distinguished writers as "Boz" himself, John Forster, Mark Lemon (the editor of *Punch*), Douglas Jerrold, and such well-known artists as Frank Stone, John Leech, and Augustus Egg; while for my *confidante* and companion I was promised the society of dear Georgina

Hogarth. I was in the seventh heaven, for, as I have always said, theatrical business was the only business I liked, theatrical properties the only property I possessed. Then the interesting correspondence with the manager, the only despot I ever tolerated, the meetings for rehearsal, the conferences on the costume. I found myself indeed in my real element, but—when are there no buts to any bright prospects?—all of a sudden the conviction forced itself upon me that so great a delight was not in store, that some sorrow or mishap, or unforeseen obstacle, was hanging over my head, to prevent the consummation of this cherished scheme.

I have often had presentiments, and they have usually been realised; but this was more than a presentiment: it was a certainty that interfered with all my preparations, surrounding them with a feeling of apprehension. I gave orders for the making of the costume, which I was convinced I should never wear; I set myself drearily to learn the part of "Dame Kitely," which I *knew* I was never destined to recite. My foreboding was but too sadly fulfilled. My sister-in-law came into the room one day and broke to me as tenderly as possible the death, in circumstances of a most distressing nature, of that dear and beautiful friend to whom I have alluded by the name of Fanny. If any words could have afforded me consolation at so terrible a moment, they would have been such tender and sympathetic lines as those which I received from the kind manager of our company, when he said:

"We are all extremely concerned and distressed to lose you, but we feel that it cannot be otherwise, and we do not,

in our own expectation of amusement, forget the sad cause of your absence. Bulwer was here yesterday, and if I were to tell you how earnestly he and all the other friends whom you don't know have looked forward to the projected association with you, and in what a friendly spirit they all express their disappointment, you would be quite moved by it, I think."

In November, 1851, Charles Dickens and his family went to live in Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, where they remained until the year 1857. The very sound of the name is replete to me with memories of innumerable evenings passed in the most congenial and delightful intercourse; dinners, where the guests vied with each other in brilliant conversation, whether intellectual, witty, or sparkling—evenings devoted to music or theatricals. First and foremost of that magic circle was the host himself, always "one of us," who invariably drew out what was best and most characteristic in others, who used the monosyllable "we" much more frequently than that of "I," and who made use of his superiority to charm and quicken the society around him, but never to crush or overpower it with a sense of their inferiority. The most diffident girl was encouraged to express her modest opinion to the great man, and in him the youngest child ever found a ready playfellow.

I can never forget one evening, shortly after the arrival at Tavistock House, when we danced in the New Year. It seemed like a page cut out of the "Christmas Carol," as far, at least, as fun and frolic went: authors, actors, friends from near and far, formed the avenues of two long English country dances, in one of which I had

the honour of going up and down the middle, almost "interminably" as it seemed, with Charles Dickens for my partner.

The Keeleys were there, husband and wife, the former declining to dance; but when Sir Roger de Coverley struck up, he was loudly called upon to do so, and a vehement dispute began between the two sets, which should secure him in their ranks. That inimitable comedian showed so much fun in the apparent hesitation of his choice as to elicit roars of laughter, which were followed by thunders of applause, when the winning side claimed Keeley as their own.

In those days, before the guests went into dinner at Tavistock House, the children of the family were admitted into the drawing-room, and seldom have I seen more lovely boys, or sweeter or more graceful little girls; and it is still a pleasure to me to talk over that happy past with Kate Perugini and her sister, with Harry Dickens and his pretty wife, who venerates the memory of the father-in-law she never knew, and brings up her beautiful children to do the same.

In 1853, the Dickens family were settled at Boulogne-sur-Mer, having rented a charming house on the hill just outside the town, called Villa des Moulineaux, which name it derived from some neighbouring water-mills. It was well situated, and the house, which you approached through (I might almost say) an avenue of splendid hollyhocks, was built against the side of the hill, so that you reached the *res-de-chaussée* by a flight of steps, and stepped out of the top floor into a garden-path. It commanded an extensive

view of Boulogne, old and new, and its picturesque harbour, while on the heights the Napoleon Column was visible, which commemmorated Napoleon the First's intended invasion of England.

Charles Dickens in his invitation that I should come and visit him for some weeks, provided me with an escort, in the person of the late Mr Peter Cunningham, the agreeable editor of Horace Walpole's correspondence, and in his company I performed the voyage. Many and pleasant were my fellow-guests in that happy summer. Douglas Jerrold, with his flow of conversation, which elicited so rich a return in that of his host; if I might make use of a homely simile, I would say, that brace of talkers reminded me of Bryant & May's matches "on a superior scale." It was here also I learned to know and value Wilkie Collins, the popular writer of fiction.

Charles Dickens was an indefatigable pedestrian, and took most extensive walks in the neighbourhood, and it was amusing to find that the friends who on the first days after their arrival gladly agreed to accompany him, mostly slackened by degrees in their readiness to do so, and had such urgent demands for correspondence or literary work as to detain them at home. He was thus often reduced to the society of his sister-in-law and myself, who, from so constantly sharing in his walks, had got into excellent condition.

During the time I was at Boulogne there was a fair, and a camp, and a theatre, and many minor excitements, but these halycon days were suddenly clouded over by the outbreak of that dreadful epidemic, diphtheria, which

was at first called the "Boulogne sore-throat." It caused a panic in our little household; mother and children were shipped off at a moment's notice, and the rest quickly followed, with no small regret at the breaking up of so good a time.

It was in the year 1857 that Charles Dickens took possession of the little house of Gad's Hill, within a walk of Rochester. I thought the dwelling characteristic of the man, for it was situated on the high road, frequented by all sorts and conditions of men—the tramp and vagrant in their tatters, the well-dressed and joyous holiday-makers, emigrants travelling to the sea-coast, military men changing quarters, pedestrians, equestrians. From the opposite garden of the wayside inn, which bore the traditional sign of the "Falstaff," came the sound of the bowling of skittles, with an old-fashioned ring in its merriment. The smooth lawn with its flower-beds, the hay-fields beyond, and the beautiful woods of Cobham Park in the distance, represented to my fancy the tenderness of Charles Dickens' sentiment, and the freshness and the delicacy of his imagination.

Many were the summer days I passed under the roof of that little dwelling, many the hours I sat with Georgina Hogarth in the garden, or in one of the glades of a small wood which, in the sweet season, formed a charming resting-place, all hung with garlands of eglantine, with long strings of blue convolvulus, and the sweet-scented honeysuckle. These were the hours during which "Boz" was left to his work, in what I called his "lair," for few of us would have risked disturbing him, when he had taken up

GAD'S HILL.

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his position for the morning's labour, in the *châlet*, which his friend Fechter, the tragedian, had brought him from Paris. In the setting-up of the said *châlet*, after the manner of a child's architectural toy, Charles had found the greatest amusement, for he was indeed one of those who find

"A child's keen delight in little things,"

and the hanging of his pictures, the arranging his furniture, the annexation of a tiny conservatory, and the construction of an underground tunnel, which connected the area round the house with a small plantation of lofty cedars, under the shade of which he had erected his *châlet*, were all sources to him of intense interest.

In the afternoon he sought relaxation, and then the other inmates of the house came in for their share of his enviable society, and the basket-carriage was brought to the door, drawn by the "sober Newman Noggs," the harness adorned with musical bells, which his friend Mr Lehmann had brought him from Norway, and we would take long drives all around this picturesque neighbourhood. Sometimes we would alight at a distant point, to return home on foot; sometimes we would wend our way through green hop-gardens on one side, and golden cornfields on the other for a distance of many miles; yet we were never wearied. I remember once Georgina Hogarth and I had accompanied him to a new spot of interest which he had lately discovered. He walked at his usual swinging rate, and we had proudly kept up with him. Only five minutes had been allowed for refreshment, as he called it, otherwise rest, between reaching the goal and

arriving at home. How pleased his fellow-pedestrians were to receive the following tribute: "Well done!—ten miles in two hours and a half!" I sit in my arm-chair now, and look back on that feat as almost miraculous.

Charles Dickens, himself a hero, was a hero-worshipper, and in all of my experience I never knew a man so utterly exempt from the slightest tinge of professional jealousy.

One day I went with his two daughters, Mary and Katie (Mrs Charles Collins, who, with her husband, spent most of the summer under the paternal roof) and their aunt to meet him at the station. Lifting up the hand-bag which he always carried, he exclaimed: "Here, girls, I have a treat for you—Tennyson's magnificent poem of 'The Idylls of the King.' Is it not glorious to think, that after having written for so many years, a man should now bring forth, perhaps, the noblest of his works." What enchanting hours of summer sunshine were passed in reading for the first time those magical pages, which since that moment have been pored over and conned to my heart's content.

Among our visitors at Gad's Hill were Fechter, the distinguished actor, Edmund Yates, Marcus Stone, and many others. I mention these three names in conjunction, for a special reason. Fechter, for whose talent I had an unbounded admiration, rather disappointed me as a companion. He had a limited scope in conversation, but as a mimic, he was unrivalled. It was not only that with the exact tone and inflexion of voice he assumed the gait and gesture, but he actually brought his features into so close a resemblance with the original he intended to copy, that when he walked into the room and advanced to greet me, I never failed to

say, "How do you do, Mr Yates?" "I am glad to see you, Marcus," and so on to others of my acquaintance.

Charles Dickens, junior, had married early in life, what one might well call a juvenile bride, and their two eldest children, Charles the third, and his sister, who went by the pet name of "Micketty" in the family, often came down for fresh air to their grandfather's country house. "Micketty" always called him "Venerable," and one day she made me laugh heartily, when, coming into the little study, she found me busy at the book-shelves.

"Oh, Miss Boyle," she said confidentially, "you take care; if 'Venerable' sees you at his books, you'll catch it" —and verily, if that had been true, I should often have "caught it," for I was "always at his books."

Another time she was talking to her aunt and myself about what she intended to do when she grew up, "For then you know, of course, poor mamma will be dead." Now her hearers did not see any reason to fear such a contingency, for she was one of the youngest mothers we knew, and we told her daughter so, but she would not be convinced, saying, "Oh, no! she's very old indeed; do remember how long I have had her."

But I must pause in recalling these trifling anecdotes, which naturally recur to my mind as I indite these family records.

In November, 1868, a terrible blow awaited me in the death of my beloved brother, Cavendish, after two days' illness. Between him and Charles Dickens there existed a close and tender friendship, and the letter of condolence I received from Gad's Hill on that occasion touched me

deeply, and all the more that it spoke in high terms of him whose loss had plunged me into such poignant grief. But all Charles Dickens' letters which he addressed to mourners were remarkable for the delicate manner in which he expressed his sympathy, being free from the usually conventional and matter-of-fact manner of offering consolation. The two friends were shortly to be re-united.

The year following my brother's death, I went to Rome for the winter, and on my return to England I visited Charles Dickens in London. It was in the evening, and he was just going out to dinner at Lord Houghton's. He said he did not feel very well and would gladly have sent an excuse, but his old friend Milnes had made him promise to meet the Prince of Wales. "Have you seen Lord Clarendon," he said, "since you came back to England? I never saw any one look so ill, he is quite changed."

I had not seen him, but told him I was engaged to luncheon with Lord and Lady Clarendon the next day. He bade me good-night, assured me he counted on seeing me very soon at "Gads," and the door closed behind him. The following afternoon I realised the truth of what he had said of Lord Clarendon's ill-looks—and that day fortnight both those great and good men, and dear friends of mine, had passed away, leaving me, as well as the world, impoverished by their loss.

On the 9th June, 1870, I had been attending the marriage of my little favourite, Florence, Lady Hastings, with Sir George Chetwynd. It was a pretty wedding and gay scene, and the bride, who always "looks lovely" in the newspapers, on this occasion truly merited the epithet. I

came home, and on my table lay the fatal letter, announcing that Charles Dickens had had a stroke of paralysis, and little hopes were entertained of his recovery. I lost no time in changing my wedding garment, and dashing off for Charing Cross, took the rail for Gravesend, and drove in a fly to the scene of so many past delights, my heart beating with fear all the way I went.

I had for my companion, my trusty and attached maid, Louisa Simons, who loved Gad's Hill and its owners almost as much as I did, and her society and sympathy upheld me in my suspense.

I got down at the door of the stable-yard, and crawling rather than walking across the yard, where the two faithful dogs knew and greeted me, and passing through a little well-known side gate, gained the entrance, and flung myself down, half-fainting, on a seat, in that spot hallowed by the remembrance of so many happy summer evenings. The door was open, but I did not dare enter, or ring, or move, lest I should break the silence which was profound, save, indeed, for the voices of the choirs of birds, who were singing his requiem in the garden he loved.

A short time passed, when his eldest son Charles came into the porch to breathe the fresh air for a few moments, and I think he was touched with my deep distress, and my participation in his own grief. He led me into the little study and brought his aunt to speak to me. It was a comfort to be clasped for an instant in her arms, but my place was no longer there, and I left the little house for ever.

CHAPTER XXVI

PROTECTIONIST PARTY AT BURGHLEY[1]

ONE of the most interesting places which I frequented after my return to England was "Burghley[2] house by

[1] My Aunt's visits to Burghley extended over many years. Lord and Lady Exeter were extremely hospitable, and continued their hospitality until his death in January 1867. As an Oxford undergraduate, I was more than once invited to one of the younger parties, and the stately but courteous manners of the house impressed my mind indelibly. It was one of the last great houses in which ceremonial at breakfast was maintained. We were always expected to appear in frock-coats and faultless garb for the morning meal, to which we went in pairs as strictly arranged as for dinner. Smoking was absolutely taboo, and I was never sure whether the action of a younger son of the house in luring a few adventurous spirits after midnight to the depths of the servants' hall was quite approved by his sire. We used to don our shooting things after having formally conducted the ladies from breakfast, and we were taken to the *rendez-vous* on ponies with impossible mouths. I was always a bad rider, and was invariably run away with, but generally arrived at the meet somehow. But I well remember how a gallant guardsman, owner of a historic name, was taken by his incontrollable steed right through Stamford town, and with difficulty parried, on a not very triumphant return, a charge of furious riding. Our mishaps were the source of no little kindly chaff from the Lord Burghley of those days; but he, like his father and mother, seemed to have no other object whatever than to make the hospitality of the grand old place a source of unalloyed pleasure and enjoyment to the guests.

[2] Lord Tennyson writes of "Burleigh House by Stamford town," but the spelling given in the text has been adopted by many generations.

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331 E. 10th St.

Stamford town." Here lived one of the best and kindest of women, the daughter of that beloved uncle, Mr Poyntz[1] to whom I have so often alluded. Lady Exeter had been before her marriage one of the most admired and courted of London beauties, and the suitors for her hand were as numerous as those usually attributed to a princess of fairyland. Indeed it was a family jest at the morning meal, when the letters were laid on the breakfast table, "Where is Isabella's proposal?" Rather a laughable tribute was once paid her in later times by a retainer of Burghley, which was called forth by my mother's remark to the bailiff: "How noble and good is Lady Exeter!" "Yes," returned the man with enthusiasm, "I never look at her ladyship without saying to myself, 'that is a fallen angel!'"

It was at Burghley that I first made acquaintance with Mr Stafford O'Brien, who afterwards became my colleague and fellow-actor in many a joyous revel and dramatic entertainment at Rockingham, Drayton and Farming Woods, names, each of which recall many a fond memory and tender regret. A housekeeper whom I knew at Burghley, and who was what is ambiguously termed a retired gentlewoman, and was constantly referring to better days, told me once, that she found a real consolation for all her troubles when gazing on that magnificent building "especially, Miss Boyle, the quadrangle by moonlight"; and certainly it was a "sight for sair e'en," as it recurs

[1] Brownlow, second Marquess of Exeter; married, 1824, Isabella daughter of William Stephen Poyntz, of Cowdray, and was consequently my aunt's first cousin.

most frequently to my mind one brilliant winter's day, rising out of a plain of snow, with its golden gates resplendent in the sunshine.

I usually occupied the very small apartment called "Queen Elizabeth's China Closet," in which was a portrait by Domenichino far more lovely in my sight than that of the renowned Cenci, which in some measure it resembled. To my mother was allotted a room close at hand, and I used to laugh at her nightly search in manifold hiding-places, behind the tapestry, in the turret, etc., lest some one should lie there concealed.

A picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence—one of his earliest, while still imbued with admiration for the works of Sir Joshua—represents the heroine of the Laureate's beautiful ballad,[1] with her husband and "three fair children,"—"the village maiden" who, in her unexpected transition from obscurity to splendour—

> "Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
> To all duties of her rank—"

was such—

> "That she grew a noble lady
> And the people loved her much."

[1] Henry, tenth Earl and first Marquess of Exeter, married, *en secondes noces*, Sarah, daughter of Mr Thomas Hoggins of Bolas, in Shropshire. He was raised to the Marquisate in 1801, and married, as third wife, Elizabeth, Dowager Duchess of Hamilton. The phrase

> "Not a lord in all the county
> Is so great a lord as he,"

is open to comment, save as a poetic licence. The fair children were 1, Brownlow, second Marquess, the husband of my cousin; 2, Lord Thomas, who married, in 1838, Lady Sophia Lennox; and 3, Lady Sophia, who married, in 1818, Right Honourable Henry Pierrepont. Lady Sophia Pierrepont was grandmother of the present Duke of Wellington.

Amongst my frequent visits to my cousins Lord and Lady Exeter, at this magnificent old dwelling, to which I have alluded in a former chapter, the one most worthy of being remembered was that paid in the year 1850, when the strife of parties respecting the Corn Laws was still raging. In fact it immediately preceded the short period of Lord Derby's administration, and the house party included the greater part of those who were destined to become the principal members of his Government. It was in this manner that I became acquainted with that great Protectionist leader, and the man who eventually succeeded him as the head of the Conservative Party, Benjamin Disraeli. Lord Derby was then in the vigour of physical and intellectual strength, and in the mornings which he passed with his supporters and colleagues in private Cabinet councils, his whole time and thoughts were naturally absorbed in the great question of the day, and in the formation of a system of policy to be carried out, when, as appeared probable, he would become Prime Minister. From such important discussions the ladies of the house were excluded, as a matter of course; for the day had not arrived when women loudly clamoured for entrance into public life, neither had the gentler sex the ambition or the spirit of their sisters of the present day, who demand a right to sit at the official board with the lords of creation, and share their titles, after a somewhat Hibernian fashion, of "Alder-*men* and Council-*men*."

How delightful, how captivating, was Lord Derby when work gave place to leisure, how enviable was the position of her who sat beside him at luncheon or dinner, how

ringing his laugh, how brilliant his nonsense, how irresistible the good-humoured chaff in which he engaged with his worshipper, Mr Disraeli, who offered an ever-contented front to many a keen, though not envenomed dart; what a playfellow he was in conversation, full of mischief and sparkle! In my own mind I always considered him a perennial school-boy. It appeared to me that the wand of some enchanter had arrested the beats of his heart and the flow of his spirits at boyhood point. No wonder he died before old age crept on him; the very idea appeared incongruous in connection with him.

One evening we had a large ball, to which the town of Stamford and the surrounding neighbourhood had been invited, and I was much amused by overhearing a conversation between two Stamfordians: "Do you know which is Dizzy?" "Well, naturally, because I see *Punch* every week." For even at that remote period, the peculiar features and singular appearance of the future Lord Beaconsfield had already become familiar to the world through the cartoons of our London *Figaro*. There was scarcely ever a man who changed so little in aspect; his face grew thinner, his youthful locks became sparse and tinged with grey in later years, but he was the same man grown older, and a portrait of him between the ages of twenty and thirty might easily be recognised at fifty or sixty. He was, indeed, a godsend to the portrait-painter, or caricaturist, and I think it speaks much to his credit that he always gazed on his own effigy in *Punch* or elsewhere, however comic it might be, with intense and unalloyed amusement. In those days, and in the presence of

his Chief, as we used to call Lord Derby, Dizzy did not take so prominent a part in social conversation as he naturally did in after years; but there was something which bespoke concentrated power and resolute ambition, at least to the readers of physiognomy. His demeanour towards his wife was through life a theme of commendation amongst those who knew him little or well. The delicate tact with which he warded off the occasional sallies that her eccentricities provoked, and the manner in which he, so to speak, shielded her from ridicule, were conspicuous by their affectionate diplomacy.

Mrs Disraeli, the farmer's pretty daughter and the widow of a millionaire, was a hero worshipper by profession, and laid herself and her dowry at the feet of the handsome and talented Benjamin. She was a happy woman, a happy wife, and a happy member of Society, which she enjoyed to the full. To few people could the epithet *naïve* be better applied. She rather lent herself to than resented the laugh which her unexpected observations would often raise. To me she was especially amiable, and I confess to having found untold amusement in her conversation.

At the time of which I am speaking, the interior of Burghley presented an appearance of more than usual brilliancy. The spacious rooms, whose walls were decorated by the paintings of old Italian masters, profusely lighted, the groups of gaily-dressed and richly jewelled ladies, enlivened by a sprinkling of Knights of the Bath and Garter, and last, but not least, as far as the pageant went, the numbers of male attendants in the traditional garb of the retainers of the house of Cecil, in

their sky-blue livery, resplendent with frogs and aiguillettes of silver. The whole scene was calculated to impress the spectator as one of no common splendour.

Mrs Disraeli had been describing to me the distinguished manner in which she and her husband had been received at the Court of Louis Philippe, and at that of the President, when she paused, and looking round complacently, exclaimed: "But I do assure you, dear Miss Boyle, I like this sort of thing a great deal better." The speech reminded me in some measure of that of Caractacus of Rome, yet I could scarcely say that Burghley House reminded me of a humble cottage in Britain.

Entirely unconnected with the preceding pages, either as to dates, locality, or personages, is the slight sketch, which I cannot refrain from subjoining, of the constant visits I paid to Bowood. My first acquaintance with Lord Lansdowne[1] was made while I was staying with Mrs Sartoris, of whom he was a warm and zealous admirer, and our friendship ripened so quickly, that I could scarcely imagine that I had not known that dear, kind old man all my life. He was a frequent visitor at my little house in London, and a frequent inviter when anything especially agreeable presented itself in the way of a party at Lansdowne House or Bowood. Agreeable indeed must the intercourse with those two houses have ever been to me, for his daughter-in-law who did the honours of both, rivalled my host in kindness, and I rejoice to think that we still meet to talk over those happy days of long ago.

[1] Third Marquess of Lansdowne, first known in the political world as Lord Henry Petty.

BOWOOD.

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331 EAST 10TH ST.

All that were remarkable in Politics, Art, and Literature, were constantly grouped round the hospitable board of the Master of Bowood, in that spacious dining-room, illuminated in every sense of the word by the shaded lights round the walls cast on the beautiful *chef-d'œuvres* of Clarkson Stanfield. It is the only instance I have ever seen of an apartment thus lighted, and the effect is as charming as it is singular. The house is full of Art treasures, of painting and sculpture, all collected by the Lord Lansdowne of whom I am writing,[1] who told me himself that when he first succeeded to the estate, and went to inspect the house at Bowood, the principal furniture consisted of two or three chairs and a looking-glass or so in the bedrooms. Now what luxury, what beauty at every step. As one descends the stairs from the drawing-room leading to the dining-room a magnificent caste of Michel Angelo's Pensiero[2] arrests attention in a lofty niche, while priceless paintings of Murillo, Rembrandt, Salvator Rosa, etc., decorate the walls; and the lovely features of Mrs Sheridan, as Saint Cecilia, smile upon one from Sir Joshua's canvas.

Our host was a great patron and connoisseur of the drama, and encouraged private theatricals; and I remember a successful evening in which Tom Taylor, and my friend Gowran Vernon[3] assisted me. Lord Shelburne[4] had lately brought with him from Paris a collection of those monster

[1] 1889.
[2] The statue of Lorenzo de Medici.
[3] Hon. Gowran Vernon, second son of Robert, first Lord Lyveden.
[4] The late and fourth Lord Lansdowne.

heads which are so often introduced into pantomimes, and we were bent on utilising these valuable properties.

It chanced that evening that among the guests, both gentlemen and ladies, there were three or four more than commonly tall, and we therefore imagined the representation of a scene in the land of Brobdingnag, each performer wearing one of the pantomime heads. To me the smallest was allotted, wearing as it did a simpering expression of innocence, bordering on imbecility, as in a juvenile costume I assumed the character of the youthful Glumdalclitch.

The eldest hope of the house, then a lovely little boy, dressed in a sailor's suit, was supposed (by a stretch of imagination) to have been washed on shore, as the diminutive Gulliver. He was presented to me by my gigantic parent as a plaything. Does His Excellency, the Governor-General of India,[1] remember that evening when he cast upon me the most captivating glances of anger and indignation, while I knelt down to caress and admire my newly-acquired flotsam? His anger has long passed away, but not my admiration, for in the little Gulliver of those days I honour the independent Politician, and the high-minded statesman of these.

[1] Henry, present Marquess of Lansdowne, was Governor-General of India from 1888 to 1894.

CHAPTER XXVII

ALTHORP

IN speaking of Althorp, the home of my dear cousin, Lord Spencer, I place no dates at head of the chapter, as my constant visits there embraced the period of many years, and I am grateful to say that, even at this present writing, I am still welcome in that resort of former happy days. It is a place of so much interest as to claim some description from my pen. Althorp has been the home of the Spencer family since the reign of Henry VIII. The Library consisted of seven rooms, the very walls composed of books, 50,000 in number, one room containing the rarest editions—Block books, the first book ever printed in movable type, the largest collection of Caxton and his pupils, and the early Venetian printers, the famous Boccaccio, which produced at the sale of the Duke of Roxburgh, in 1812, the largest sum which had ever been paid for a single book up to that date. The competitors for this prize were the Marquess of Blandford, and George John, second Earl Spencer; it was knocked down to the former for £2,260, but being in difficulties some time afterwards, he was fain to sell it to the owner of the Althorp Library for the comparative small sum of £750. The mention of this volume

reminds me of an incident which occurred to me at Ferrara while travelling with my dear mother, when we paid a visit to the Public Library in that town. The *custode* showed me a rare edition of Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso," telling me at the same time that there was a duplicate in the possession of an English Count; and I can well recall the pride with which I informed him that that Count was my cousin. During the remainder of my visit, which lasted another ten minutes, I was treated with increased respect as the kinswoman of the Count in question.

But to return to Althorp. The staircase occupying the centre of the house, originally an open court, is supposed to have been enclosed by the first Countess of Sunderland (Sacharissa). The avenues were planted by Le Notre, who laid out Versailles for Louis XIV. The heronry was planted in the year of the Spanish Armada, as is shown by the date carved on the memorial stone. From the heronry Whyte Melville, in his charming novel of "Holmby House" (Holdenby), describes the hawking party galloping across the park, past the Hawking Tower, a small lodge with open galleries, in which the ladies sat to observe the sport. This lodge, now modernised in aspect and inhabited by the keeper, was built to commemorate the visit of Queen Anne of Denmark and her son on their road from Scotland, when Ben Jonson's masque was played, the poet being an intimate friend of the Lord Spencer of the time.

The Portrait Gallery is very remarkable, running nearly the whole length of the house, and honourable mention is made of the contents by Evelyn in his Diary, while the later treasures contributed by Sir Joshua Reynolds and

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Gainsborough have been frequently eulogised by more modern chroniclers. John Spencer, the second son of the third Earl of Sunderland, inherited the estate of Althorp on the succession of his elder brother to the Dukedom of Marlborough. John, or Jack, as he was familiarly called, was the scapegrace of the family, in spite, or perhaps on account of which, he was the favourite of his maternal grandmother, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. He was always in debt, or in some scrape or another, and many were the lovers' quarrels which passed between them. On one occasion "Jack" was in such disgrace with Her Grace that she ordered him out of the room, and desired him never to darken her doors again. The first part of her command was obeyed, but the room being on the ground floor, and the window open at the time, scarcely five minutes had elapsed before the culprit had jumped in again and, kneeling humbly at his grandmother's feet, easily obtained the pardon which he had so often forfeited. After the death of the third Earl Spencer, better known under his ministerial appellation of Viscount Althorp, the title and estates devolved on his brother, the Honourable Frederic Spencer, my second cousin by birth, my first cousin by marriage, his wife being Elizabeth Poyntz. From that time my family and I became frequent guests at this Northamptonshire home.

Lord Spencer, who was known to his contemporaries as "Fritz," was in the Navy, and distinguished himself at the Battle of Navarino. He was a sailor every inch of him, with a downright and almost abrupt manner, contrasting with his kind and sympathetic nature, after a fashion by no

means displeasing to those who knew him intimately. "There he goes," was the description given of him one day, "with his rough bear's coat buttoned lightly over his tender heart." The speaker was my brother Cavendish, whose appointment as Governor of the Military Prison at Weedon (only six miles from Althorp) brought him into the neighbourhood, and, what was better, into constant contact with a man whom he admired and loved, and of whom he became the frequent and confidential companion. Thus it came about that we were intimately connected with the joys and sorrows of the Spencer household. How many hours of intellectual and social delight have I passed under Althorp's hospitable roof! During the course of the visits here alluded to, which spread over several years, many were the festivities and pleasant gatherings we enjoyed at the time-honoured old house.

One evening we gave a theatrical performance consisting of the pretty little comedietta of "The Rough Diamond," in which Frederic Ponsonby,[1] Cavendish, and I took the principal parts, and another time we arranged some *tableaux vivants*, which were among the best I have ever seen. We took two or three of the Sir Joshua's which embellished the walls; one, a picture of his grandfather, was impersonated by the present lord, whose likeness to the original painting was most striking. Another most beautiful *tableau* was that of Lady Waldegrave and her two sisters, from the famous group at Strawberry Hill. Lady Spencer and her two sisters[2] represented the three ladies

[1] Brother to Sir Henry Ponsonby, afterwards in Holy Orders.

[2] The late Lady Clifden and the late Lady Charles Bruce.

in this exquisite portrait; and once more the family likeness they bore to the picture in question made it appear rather a replica than a living representation. The magnificent Vandyke of the two brothers-in-law, Lords Bristol and Bedford, which have been the glory of many later exhibitions, formed another successful specimen of our skill, and was entered in the programme as a miniature copy. The two noblemen above mentioned were personated by Horace Seymour[1] and Courtenay Boyle, the one dark, the other fair, but both comely youths at the time of which I am speaking. In this slight record of the annals of Althorp during my time, I cannot resist making some allusions to more than one member of the household whose doings and sayings caused us no slight amusement.

Prominent among these was the house-steward, Thorpe, a man of great importance in his own estimation, as well as in that of others. His tastes were ultra-aristocratic, his manners in accordance with his tastes, and his language choice, very flowery, and sometimes quite original. One day, soon after his return from Cambridge, Lord Althorp thus addressed the worthy major-domo: "I think you understand that I wish my servant, Lennard, to go out of livery and become an upper servant." "My lord," was the pompous reply, "I have already given him his *statu quo*."

One afternoon when the reception-rooms were being decorated for a ball, to which the whole neighbourhood was invited, Lady Spencer (the present) asked Thorpe if the gardener had finished arranging the ornamental mono-

[1] Brother to Charlotte, Countess Spencer.

gram over the door. "Well, my Lady," was the reply, in a hesitating tone of voice, "I believe he has done so, but I wish your Ladyship would cast an eye over it." Lady Spencer saw by the speaker's manner that there was something he found fault with. "I am very busy," she said; "is it not all right?" "I am sorry to say, my Lady," the words pronounced in a tone of deep regret, "they have placed over your Ladyship's monogram a paltry baron's coronet."

Another remarkable member of the community was Mrs Chouler, the wife of the aged gamekeeper, whose conjugal indignation was aroused one evening by the following incident. The order of the day, or rather night, had been charades, and finding that the hour was not late, we determined to eke out our performance with a word which had a local and limited interest. The day had been memorable to the family circle, on account of our young lord having made his first appearance in full and regular costume of the Pytchley Hunt. To commemorate so auspicious an event, we chose the word "Althorp." First scene—the whole of the Dramatic Company assembled on the stage. Second scene—the great "Thorpe," the stately house-steward before mentioned in solitary splendour. Third scene—Viscount Althorp in full hunting garb. The curtain fell amid deafening plaudits. Next day we called on Mrs Chouler, in her pretty house at the end of the avenue, and inquired her opinion of last night's performance. "Well, Miss Mary, she said, "of course if my lord thought proper, it was all right, but I think it struck most people as very

odd that Thorpe should be bowing and scraping on the stage, when Chouler has lived in the family years and years before him." Our expostulations were useless, it was in vain we tried to point out that "*all Chouler*" would not have answered, and I feel that to her dying day the memory of that evening's festivity rankled in the mind of that faithful retainer.

Another time I paid Mrs Chouler a visit in company with what she used to call "The two Captains," my brother Cavendish, and Captain Quin, R.N., Lord Spencer's nephew. Says the latter: "You have a very good memory —can you tell me the name of the vessel my uncle Bob[1] had, in such and such a year? Neither Lord Spencer nor I can remember?" After a little discussion on the subject, Captain Quin suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, yes, by-the-by, I know now; it was the *Owen Glendower*." "To be sure, sir, to be sure, that is it; I knew it was something of a sea-nymph."

The Choulers were an estimable couple, the old husband survived his wife many years, and when I last saw him, shortly before his death, still wearing his velveteen shooting-coat, with his long white hair falling on his shoulders, he looked like a figure out of one of Rembrandt's beautiful pictures which had stepped out of its frame. He lived to the age of ninety-six.

Lord Spencer was very fond of frequenting his well-filled stables and conversing with his stud-groom as to the names and qualifications of their inmates. One day he remarked to him: "I have been thinking over the

[1] The Honourable Robert Spencer, R.N.

selection of a name for the new mare, but I cannot please myself yet." "Well, my lord," was the answer, "you bought her on the 29th of May; why not call her the 'Merry Monarch?'" "Well," said his master, striving to conceal a smile, "I think that will scarcely do; perhaps we had better call her 'Empress,' in honour of the Empress Eugénie." "Very good, my lord, then I shall have nothing to do but to change the tablet over Emperor's stall by adding an 's' to it!" What an easy solution to a difficulty.

The library was also rich in characters. One of its keepers, Mr Jakeman, knew the position of every single book in its seven rooms. He was an excellent and eccentric-looking man, whom we named "Dominie Sampson." His predecessor was a short, thick-set little man, who complained once to my brother that the then Lord Spencer did not keep up the honour of the library sufficiently, as he had discontinued some of the principal works. "Well, now, Captain," he would say, "for instance, my lord has never taken in the last numbers of the 'Newgate Calendar.'" Read was his name, but not his nature; he was very deaf, and even I, who flattered myself I knew how to make the deaf hear, found a difficulty in his case. He told us that some years before, he had had a heavy cold and it had fallen on his hearing; it must indeed have been very heavy.

It was in the Christmas of the year 1857 that a large party was assembled at Althorp, including my brother Cavendish, his wife, their eldest boy and myself; but alas! the chief part of the guests were obliged to disperse,

and the happy season was turned into mourning by the sudden death of our noble host, Frederic, Lord Spencer, leaving a whole household, a large tenantry, and a wide circle of friends to mourn his premature death. We remained on for some days to share in the common grief of his widow and children. But his successor never slackened in kindness and hospitality to the inmates of the Weedon prison, and the "Gaoler," as he was familiarly called, was still welcome in the old home, and still continued the charge he had undertaken of the precious Library, finding in Sarah Spencer[1] an invaluable colleague in this labour of love.

I trust I have not been led into too long a digression in this record of the days which are no more, bound up as they are with fond memories of beloved companions, concerning whom it is a sad delight to converse with the dear cousin to whom I have dedicated these pages.

[1] Sister of the present Earl Spencer.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

It was at the house of G. P. R. James that we first became acquainted—that mutual friend of whom Landor thus speaks in one of his earliest letters to me:—

"You cannot overvalue James. There is not on God's earth (I like this expression, vulgar or not) any better creature of His hand, any one more devoted to His high service—the office of improving us through our passions."

The close friendship between these two men was to me inexpressively touching, inasmuch as it would be almost impossible to conceive a more striking contrast than they presented in every respect. Mr James, although a man of romance and sentiment, and by nature of an ardent temperament, had a quiet and staid demeanour, self-disciplined and self-contained; whereas all those who peruse any records of Landor must be well aware that none of the above epithets can in any way be applicable to him—such records, for instance, as Forster's Life, the admirable sketch given by Mr Lowell of his first and only visit to that remarkable man at Bath, or the almost miraculous likeness of his moral portraiture by Mr Sidney Colvin, which caused me to ask the biographer if Landor had ever visited him in dreams. The pet name which I and my sister had for him was the "gentle savage." Gentle and loving he was to those he loved, especially to women, both young and old; so much so indeed, as sometimes to be blinded in his

discrimination of their worth, and which was unfortunately proved in his declining years when he became the dupe for a time of two designing women. The story is a well-known and most distressing one, for, when his eyes were opened, he did indeed become "savage," and poured out the vials of his wrath in such violent and uncompromising language as legally to entitle his persecutors to heavy damages.

Gentle and pitiful he was to animals of all kinds, but dogs were his constant companions, and a large greyhound belonging to my sister was one of his special favourites. He told me once, quite in confidence, his discovery that dogs, whatever their nationality, understood Italian better than any other language; and in that soft tongue he always addressed a new canine acquaintance. In some letters written to me, which have been published in the *Century Magazine*, he thus speaks of "Pomero," a dear little Pomeranian Spitz, and a great chum of my own when I used to go and pass a couple of days or so at Bath in a room hung with doubtful paintings of angels by Beato or Granacci, as he used laughingly to say, "an angel among angels":[1]—

"Alas, I have lost my poor dear Pomero! He died after a long illness, apparently from a kick he received during my absence. The whole house grieved for him. I buried him in a coffin in the garden. I would rather have lost everything else I possessed in the world. Seven years we lived together in more than amity. He loved me with all his heart; and what a heart it was! mine beats audibly while I write about him. Pray for me and Pomero; some people are so wicked as to believe we shall never meet again."

Charles Dickens was one of Landor's warmest admirers; he loved him dearly, and, as the saying goes, "all round." He understood, and was even amused, by his outbursts of eloquent vituperation, and the character he has drawn of Boythorn in "Bleak House" is true to the very life.

A school-fellow thus describes him: "In those days he was the most impetuous of schoolboys, *now* he is the most impetuous

[1] "Un Anguletto fra Anguli."

of men; *then* the loudest boy in the world, *now* the loudest of men; *then* the sturdiest boy in the world, *now* the sturdiest man; *then* the heartiest boy in the world, *now* the heartiest man. Talking or laughing he makes the very house shake. But it is the inside of the man, the warm heart of the man, the passion of the man, the fresh blood of the man. His language is as astounding as his voice. He is always in extremes, frequently in the superlative degree. He talks sometimes like an ogre, which some people believe him to be. No one could be more aware of his irascibility than Landor himself, who told me, amid shouts of laughter, how he had overheard a peasant at his own Florentine villa describing him in these terms: 'Oh, he's a capital good fellow, but—— he's a real devil when the fit's upon him.'"[1]

Dear "gentle savage," our whole household loved him—mother, son, daughters, and every dog in the house and yard. He would often come over to see us from Bath at our little woodland home at Millard's Hill, and he erected at his own expense a large stone cross on the banks of Marston lake (the estate of my uncle, Lord Cork). The pedestal bore the inscription: "This symbol of safety was intended to mark the spot where Carolina Boyle[2] fell into the water, whence her sister's courage rescued her." Sooth to say, my exertions were rather a sign of strength than courage, for, walking by the side of the lake, I heard the terrible cry, "Help!" and coming up to the place, I leaped into the boat, and succeeded with much difficulty in lifting "Caddy"[3] into the same. I say with difficulty, as she was much bigger and taller than myself, and her clothes were entirely full of water, hanging for more than half an hour by the frail support of a willow branch, by which she was enabled to keep her head above water; the time was marked by the chimes of the clock at Marston House, which were distinctly audible

[1] "Il signor è un vero Galant uomo, ma è un vero diavolo quando la piglia."

[2] The Honourable Carolina Boyle, daughter of Admiral the Honourable Sir Courtenay Boyle, K.C.B.

[3] *Ibid.*

on the lake. I have learned since, to my surprise and regret, that this interesting relic, namely the cross, has been removed.

Dear "gentle savage!" It is true that his voice was powerful enough to shake the house, but how tender, how musical, when he chose to modulate it! There is nothing I love more than to hear a poet read his own poems aloud, a favour in which the dear Laureate[1] has often indulged me. One day I brought two books to Landor, accompanied by a petition for the same boon. Two precious volumes, inasmuch as they were the respective gifts of our friend, G. P. R. James, and himself. In "Pericles and Aspasia" I requested him to read me the touching letter beginning "There is a gloom in deep love as in deep water," which has ever struck me as one of the most exquisite passages in English prose, and in the "Pentameron" the book opened of itself at "Boccaccio's Dream," when he is blessed by the lovely vision of his lost "Fiammietta."

More than half a century has passed away since that lecture under the shade of the sycamore in our little garden, but the tones of that voice that is gone still vibrate in my memory.

VISCOUNT STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE[2]

My first acquaintance with this eminent man, who was known to his contemporaries as the great "Elchee," was during his residence at Westbrook Hayes, within a few miles' distance of Ashridge where I was then staying, and while there, and on his return to his house in Grosvenor Square, I always met with great kindness, and was encouraged to be a constant visitor; that, not only by the great "Elchee" himself, but by the gentle and courteous Lady Stratford,[3] whose rare fate it had been to be a wife and an

[1] Alfred, first Lord Tennyson.

[2] Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe; born 1786; died 1880.

[3] Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of James Alexander, Esq. She died in 1882.

ambassadress at twenty. Between their second daughter and myself there sprung up a close intimacy, and our meetings were frequent beneath the roof of dear Lady Marian Alford, where both in London and at Ashridge we were often fellow-guests, and earnestly did I share the grief of her two surviving sisters, when dear "Catty"[1] passed away.

Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, even in his advanced years, was a man of magnificent presence, extreme personal beauty, with features which would kindle at a moment's notice from deep calm to an expression of varied excitement. I have seldom seen a face that answered more faithfully to the feelings within, and although in his conversations with me he was ever kind and gentle, I could well imagine that it would be in no way difficult to rouse that British lion.

I was much amused by an anecdote I heard respecting him, at a time when the Eastern question was the universal theme of conversation.

One day a visitor, calling at his door, met Gladstone coming out. "How did you find Lord Stratford?" was the question addressed to the G.O.M. "Wonderfully well," was the reply, "but quite cracked on the subject of Turkey." The visitor entered. "I have just met Gladstone on the doorstep," he said. "Yes," answered Lord Stratford, "he is in great force and most agreeable, but, between ourselves, the Eastern question has sent him off his head."

I hope I may be excused in concluding this short sketch, if I insert the following lines which he one day addressed to me, on my asking him for his autograph.

"To meet your wish I fain would write,
But doubtful how to please,
My words are flat, my notions trite,
In short, I'm ill at ease.

[1] Honourable Catharine Canning, daughter of above; born 1835; died 1884.

"What may be done in such a fix
Your wit alone can tell;
Do you find straw to make the bricks,
Be sure I'll not rebel.

"I ask not wheat, I won't take chaff,
Between them lies an art
Whereby to make the gravest laugh,
Yet somehow touch the heart.

"If one there be who has the skill,
To hit so nice a law,
'Tis she who prompts the tuneful quill,
And gives the golden straw."

STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE.

23rd September 1865.

CARLYLE

IT was on the death of his wife that Carlyle's attached friend, Louisa, Lady Ashburton,[1] knowing the state of grief into which he was plunged by the sudden blow, persuaded him to come out to Mentone to pass some weeks with her in a charming villa not far from the hotel, La Grande Bretagne, where I was staying with Lady Marian Alford, and her son, the late Lord Brownlow. During the early part of the winter there had been daily intercourse between the Villa and the Hotel, and Lady Ashburton, anxious to distract the mourner's mind, and give a new turn to his thoughts, induced him with herself to become a constant associate in our walks and drives, and to dine and pass the evening very frequently at the Hotel, and while away the hours in delightful conversation with the mother and son to whom I have before alluded. It was thus I learned to know and love

[1] Louisa Caroline, daughter of the Right Honourable James A. Stewart-Mackenzie; married William, second Lord Ashburton.

Carlyle, of whose genius I had so long been an ardent admirer, that it was an easy transition from mere acquaintance to intimate friendship.

Our visit to Mentone came to a sad and abrupt close through the sudden death of Lord Brownlow, one of the most gifted, single-minded, unselfish beings it was ever my privilege to meet. On the day previous to his death he rode, as was his wont, his favourite cob through the pretty woods of Cap St Martin, accompanied by myself, two other lady friends, and Carlyle, on foot. It was a beautiful scene, and a beautiful calm evening, and Carlyle wrote a most touching account of that last ride, which he said was a beautiful close to a beautiful life.

I met him afterwards in more than one country-house in England, and when we were together in London I was in the constant habit of knocking at the door in Cheyne Row at the hour when I knew I should have the chance of enjoying the society which I prized so highly.

In one respect, and one alone, he reminded me of Walter Savage Landor, and that was the violent invectives in which he not infrequently indulged against persons, places, and opinions—a habit with which the readers of his life have become alas! too familiar. I say alas! because I think the injudicious publication of such exaggerated expressions through the cold medium of printed words, conveys a most erroneous impression of the man himself. It is true that, even while talking with me, Carlyle would launch forth into the most unwarrantable philippics, but then he would break off suddenly, and all the venom and bitterness be drowned in a burst of ringing laughter, and his handsome, though naturally grim, face would ripple all over with good-humoured smiles, so that no one who saw or heard him could doubt for a moment the kindly nature and the tender heart.

In the printed pages no friendly look is there, no tones of genial laughter, to counteract and soften down the words that look hard and uncompromising in black and white; and as I read the interesting record of his life, I earnestly desired that many passages might have been omitted.

THE GROVE[1]

At this charming Hertfordshire home I was a constant guest, and I look back with gratitude and pleasure to the "many good times" and varied social enjoyments which the very name of The Grove awakens in my mind.

It seems almost presumptuous in me to speak of the late Lord Clarendon,[2] whose fame was European, yet it is impossible for me to refrain from paying a tribute, however humble, to a man I have had every reason to love and honour.

As a statesman and a diplomatist his character belongs to the annals of his country; but I can speak of him as I knew him at home, where he reigned supreme in the hearts of his wife and children, his friends, his guests, and his household. As a host he was perhaps the most genial I ever knew. In conversation I have never found any one to surpass him in brilliancy and playfulness of wit, and all without effort, without self-consciousness, and withal skilled in the profound art of nonsense. Neither did he reserve his bright sallies or his more serious views for the learned and superior, or for such men as the erudite Sir George Cornwall Lewis,[3] his brother-in-law, or his own brother, Charles Villiers,[4] although they met him on more equal grounds than the majority of his companions. Lord Clarendon, in fact, did not demand to be tried by his social peers, for in the society of the women who surrounded him—his own wife, his own daughters, and nieces, and, I may add, of myself—he shone as brightly, and took as great a delight in captivating his listeners as he could possibly have done had his audience been one of the largest and

[1] The seat of the Earl of Clarendon.

[2] George William Frederick, fourth Earl, K.G.; born 1800; died 1870.

[3] Sir George Cornwall Lewis married Lady Theresa Lister, daughter of third Earl of Clarendon, and widow of Thomas Henry Lister, Esq.

[4] The Right Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers; born 1802; died 1898; represented Wolverhampton from 1825 till his death.

most distinguished, as it certainly was the most loving, in the world. How sociable (to use a common but expressive epithet), how snug were those domestic evenings, when one of his daughters, making herself the mouthpiece of the little circle, entreated him to read aloud to us! and how appreciative were the listeners who clustered round him as he read some scenes of Molière or some pages by Macaulay! And what a laugh he had!—what a ringing, silvery laugh, which we all, the actresses of the Grove Theatre, considered our highest guerdon, to whosesoever share it fell on the night of a dramatic performance.

His sister, Lady Theresa Lewis, resembled Lord Clarendon in many points; in intellectual gifts, in character and disposition, they were as nearly allied as in blood, and no two human beings surely ever understood each other better. Lady Theresa had been very beautiful in her youth, and in more advanced years still retained a charming smile and an expression in her blue eyes which in her earlier days might have been called "playful mischief." By nature she had the most joyous spirits, a perfectly sunny temperament such, as was once remarked to me, "God generally gave to those for whom great sorrows were in store:" and assuredly such a fate was hers in the premature death of the husband and brother she adored. I remember that dear friend once saying to me, "happiness is so natural to me, I cannot live without it, and if grief comes, either I shall kill it or it will kill me." Alas! that brave spirit was in the end forced to yield.

Before the marriage of Lord Clarendon's daughters[1] and nieces,[2] who were more like sisters than cousins, we had frequent theatrical performances, and were very rich in *jeunes premières* and *ingénues*, while I generally took the part of the *soubrette*, "maid-of-all-work," or lower comedian. Lord Skelmersdale[3] was

[1] The daughters—afterwards the Countess of Lathom, the Countess of Derby, and Lady Ampthill.

[2] The nieces—twin sisters, Lady Loch, wife of the late Lord Loch, and the Countess of Lytton, Mrs Earle and the late Lady Glenesk.

[3] The late Earl of Lathom.

THE GROVE.

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stage manager as well as actor, Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane[1] the leading comedian, and Sir Villiers Lister[2] most versatile in the parts of first lover, principal juvenile and special artist, whether as scene-painter, drop-painter, or the more delicate *metier* of make-up-artist to the *corps dramatique*. He and Lord Sefton[3] distinguished themselves one night in a splendid *pas-de-deux*, a tarantella in Neapolitan costume, Lord Sefton figuring as the *ballerina* on the occasion, with very short petticoats. One of the *costumiers* who had come down on duty suggested to his lordship the advisability of having a "female turned leg," offering him the tempting option of models of the calves and ankles of those two world-renowned dancers, Cerito and Elsler.

The present Lord Clarendon and his two brothers[4] had also their names almost nightly in our bills.

In these theatrical sports we often had by-days, when the drama assumed a most illegitimate form, and one night the late Mr Bidwell,[5] so well known as an eminent amateur, appeared in an acrobatic costume as the manager of a strolling company, whose varied talents he utilised as "the strong man," "the dancer on the tight rope" (a rather broad but very elastic deal plank), "a rapid act on a hobby-horse," with clown and riding-master in the true circus fashion, etc., all of which fantastic tricks appeared to amuse the audience as much as they did the actors, which was all that could be expected.

From the walls of the principal apartments, which served us in our festive hours for ball- or supper-rooms, looked down upon us many a cavalier immortalised by Vandyck, and at the upper end of the dining-room one of that great Fleming's *chef-d'œuvres*.

[1] The Hon. Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane, G.C.B., late Comptroller of Accounts in the Lord Chamberlain's Office, son of the fourth Earl of Bessborough.

[2] Sir Villiers Lister, K.C.M.G., son of Lady Theresa Villiers by her first husband, Mr Lister.

[3] The late Earl Sefton.

[4] Lieut.-Col. the Hon. George Villiers, Grenadier Guards; born 1847; died 1892. Hon. Francis Villiers, Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office; born 1852

[5] Mr George Bidwell of the Foreign Office.

This was the splendid portrait of the famous Earl of Derby and his heroic Countess, Charlotte de-la-Tremouille. It was strange and interesting to think that of two of Lord Clarendon's daughters, who feasted and danced beneath that picture, one[1] was destined to bear the title and inhabit the house which the lady above their heads had so gallantly defended, and the other[2] to become the wife of that noble pair's lineal descendant.

And thus ends the record of those happy days, which I hope will not prove distasteful to any of the dear companions whose eyes may fall on these pages. Happy days they were, and varied in enjoyment. For in winter there were torch dances and skating on the water; in summer paper-chases all over the beautiful woods, with rides and walks in sweet Cassiobury Park and its environs, with joyous balls and merry suppers, with young, blooming life and cheerful companionship.

HINCHINGBROOKE

THE name had been familiar to me from my earliest childhood as the home of my mother's uncle and that of her contemporaries and favourite companions, George[3] and Mary[4]; but it was not till after my dear mother's death that I became a frequent guest at the house she loved so well. For in the days of which I am speaking, the master[5] and mistress[6] were both friends of my own, and I had known them both before their marriage, and the cordial welcome they jointly gave me was gladly accepted and appreciated, particularly when the schoolboys came home for the holidays, for

[1] Alice, Countess of Lathom.
[2] Constance, wife of the fifteenth Earl of Derby.
[3] George, afterwards sixth Earl of Sandwich.
[4] Mary, afterwards Viscountess Templeton.
[5] Seventh Earl of Sandwich.
[6] Lady Mary Paget, second daughter of the Earl of Anglesey by his second marriage with Lady Charlotte Cadogan.

HINCHINGBROOKE.

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of schoolboys, I am proud to say, I have ever been a chum and crony.

Hinchingbrooke is an interesting old house, and was originally a nunnery; some parts of the religious building are still standing. It was at one time the property of the Cromwell family, and was purchased by Sir Sydney Montagu, grandfather of the first Earl of Sandwich, from the uncle of the Protector.

There is a tradition of Oliver having met King Charles I., when they were both boys, in the garden of Hinchingbrooke, when the two who were destined to be future foes engaged in a juvenile encounter, but the story requires proof.

The present structure is irregular and picturesque, having been altered and added to at intervals during the last two hundred years by succeeding owners. The entrance is through the archway of a fine gate-house, where it is said the third Earl of Sandwich, a man of feeble intellect, was confined for some time by his unscrupulous wife, the daughter of the witty but unprincipled Earl of Rochester. It is surrounded by pretty grounds rich in evergreens, situated in a small park, and presents a very imposing aspect to the railway traveller as he passes the town of Huntingdon.

The ancestors of few families however noble appear to me to have more interest for outsiders than the house of Montagu. Edward, the first Earl of Sandwich, who was so instrumental in the restoration of Charles II., is familiar to all readers of Pepys's Diary, being the god of that amusing gossip's idolatry. Samuel prided himself on his relationship and intimacy with Lord and Lady Hinchingbrooke, of whom he was certainly the confidant and adviser. Indeed, he lived hard by in a little cottage at Brampton, within a stone's throw of his patron's house, where he would often go and confer with him or "with my Lady Countess" in her husband's absence. That noble housewife was often "put to it" to make two ends meet, in consequence of her lord's open-handedness and the too frequent card-playing with His Majesty and the Castle men. Brave, generous, noble-hearted and affectionate, we cannot but share in his kinsman Pepys's partiality for

a man whose faults and shortcomings may in some measure be condoned by the times he lived in and the society he frequented. As an Admiral his sailors adored him; as a courtier he was reckoned good—perhaps too good—company, and at home he was tenderly loved by his wife and children and dependants. We know that his lordship was comely in feature and of a commanding presence, and there is little doubt that he himself agreed in the universal opinion, as we have innumerable portraits of him at all ages. He died a hero's death at the engagement at Southwolds Bay in 1672, a Dutch fire-ship having set his own vessel in a blaze. The gallant Admiral, after sending off his surviving officers and crew in the boats, remained on his own quarter-deck until his good ship, *The Royal James*, burned to the water's edge. There is a splendid painting of this desperate fight by Vanderweldt in what is fondly called the "ship room" at Hinchingbrooke, and on the opposite wall hangs a frame containing two fine miniatures by Cooper of the first Earl and Countess, together with a small pocket compass and a piece of the blue ribbon of the garter, discoloured by sea-water, which were found on the Admiral's body when it floated into Harwich Harbour.

Another prominent figure in the annals of the house and its portrait gallery is John, fourth Earl, a contrast in every way to the ancestor of whom we have been treating, yet a celebrity whose name is very conspicuous in the records of George III.'s reign. He was a man of eccentric habits but undoubted talent. An amusing anecdote is told of him when acting as plenipotentiary at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1746. It was at this time, during an international dinner when toasts were passing, that the different envoys became poetical as well as loyal in their phraseology. For instance, the Frenchman gave "His Royal master, the Sun, who illuminates the whole world;" the Spaniard "His master, the Moon, scarcely inferior in brilliancy or influence," when Lord Sandwich rose, doubtless with the twinkle in his eye and the laughing curl round the corners of his mouth we see in most of his portraits, and toasted with all the honours "His master Joshua, who made both the sun and moon to stand still."

This remarkable man was known in social circles by the nickname of "Jemmy Twitcher," from the following incident. He had at one time been intimate with the notorious Wilkes, the so-called champion of liberty, but disgusted by a scurrilous and disloyal poem which his quondam friend had written, Sandwich read it aloud in the House of Lords, thus gaining for it deserved obloquy. A few nights afterwards, at the representation of *The Beggar's Opera*, then much in vogue, Macheath exclaimed: "But that Jemmy Twitcher should preach I own surprises me." The greater part of the audience, who were partisans of "Wilkes and Liberty," burst into a round of applause, applying the passage to Lord Sandwich, who never afterwards lost the *sobriquet.*

There is a charming picture by Gainsborough[1] of the unfortunate Miss Ray, whose romantic story tempts me into a further digression. She was serving in a haberdasher's shop in Covent Garden when she first attracted the notice of Lord Sandwich, who was so smitten by her charms, that he took her under his protection, and she resided with him for many years both in London and the country, where her gentle, unassuming manners and remarkable talent for singing made her a great favourite. One evening Lord Sandwich brought home with him to dinner a Captain Hackman, who was on a recruiting party at the time at Huntingdon; he fell in love with Miss Ray, and proposed to her several times, until Lord Sandwich with judicious kindness secured him an appointment in Ireland, thinking it safest to place St George's channel between him and the object of his admiration. But Hackman's passion was strong and lasting; he left the army, entered holy orders, repaired to London where Lord Sandwich and Miss Ray then were, frequently waylaid the latter, renewed his offers of marriage, and even promised to adopt the children she had by Lord Sandwich. The refusal he received to this proposition was so decided and uncompromising as to drive him to the verge of madness. He watched Margaret Ray enter Covent Garden with some musical friends, rushed out, bought a brace of loaded pistols, and returned to the door of the theatre

[1] Bought for a comparatively small sum by the late Earl.

to await the appearance of his victim. Her coach was called in the name of Lady Sandwich, and while proceeding to it on the arm of a gentleman Hackman aimed one pistol at her and the other at himself; she fell dead, he fell wounded, and they were both conveyed to the Shakespeare Tavern. Lord Sandwich was deeply distressed at the tragic end of his fair friend; yet he wrote a letter to the murderer in Newgate, offering to intercede on his behalf, signing himself, "the man you have most injured." But Hackman's reply, couched in grateful terms, assured his "lordship that his only wish was to die," and he met his death with firmness and courage.

But to return to more modern times. Many were the delightful social gatherings, many the gay dances, *tableaux vivants*, private theatricals, and other festive doings in which I took a willing part. How well I remember the night of the 8th of September, 1855! We had had an unusually merry evening; our theatricals had gone off brilliantly, and we had danced ourselves in to the next morning, when Lord Sandwich proposed that all his guests staying in the house should adjourn to the smoking-room to finish up what we had already made "a night of." We presented a most motley appearance, most of the actors, male and female, having retained their dramatic costumes, some of which were especially grotesque. The ladies were laughing and talking, the gentlemen smoking and sipping, when we were all alike startled by the sound of the door-bell at that unearthly hour. Lord Sandwich rose, and said he would answer the summons himself, and a moment of suspense, not unmingled with fear, ensued. The door re-opened, our host re-entered, his handsome face illuminated with joy and triumph. Glorious news! Sevastopol was taken! the war was at an end! How we all shouted, while some clapped their hands, and leaped on chairs, and one and all drank to the health of our brave soldiers, and to their safe return.

It was in January 1859 that a very large party was assembled at Hinchingbrooke in honour of the visit of H.R.H. the Duchess of Cambridge[1] and Princess Mary Adelaide.[2] One evening, in

[1] The late Duchess of Cambridge. [2] The late Duchess of Teck.

hopes of amusing the company, I imagined to array myself in the costume of a hundred years before, and stepping from a frame which had been set up for that purpose, I spoke an address in the character of the Countess of Sandwich of 1759, which concluded with the following tribute to our much-loved Royal guests:

"It does rejoice my heart the time was mine
To come among you all in Fifty-nine,
To see with living eyes the fair array
Of noble, gentle company to-day;
It proves you keep the spirit of your race,
When guests like these our ancient dwelling grace.
Those who esteem the will beyond the deed,
Who no stiff forms or rigid customs need,
Who claim respect, yet kindle love the while,
Reward the smallest service with a smile,
Meet all half-way, accept each proffered part,
And draw the court we pay them from the heart."

This was a feeble but honest expression of the affection we all bore to that noble lady whose loss we are mourning in this present year of 1889, and who, although she had outlived by far the generally allotted span, was so much beloved that England was unwilling to spare her.

Often after this time I saw a great deal of the Duchess of Cambridge in different country houses, and on different occasions, and the unceasing kindness I have met with for years from Princess Mary is repaid by all I have to offer, "the grateful homage of a loving heart." I took the deepest interest in her marriage with the Duke of Teck, to whom at that period we gave the name of "Prince Charming." But I am once more wandering from my subject and indulging in the flittings of a butterfly.

The party to which I have alluded, as I said before, was in the opening of the New Year of 1859, but alas! the good wishes and happy auguries which that merry company had interchanged were not destined to be fulfilled. Before the month of March was over Hinchingbrooke was hung with black, and the sudden death

of Lady Sandwich plunged us all in the deepest mourning. Her bright blue eyes were closed, the tones of her bird-like voice were hushed, and in her I lost one of the truest and most indulgent of friends. But my visits to that dear old house were not discontinued, for, on Lord Sandwich's second marriage to Lady Blanche Egerton[1] I found one willing to keep up the old traditions and retain the old friendships of the family, and ever ready to reinstate me in the place I had so long looked upon as a home. Nor is my case altered with passing years and changed circumstances, for the present owner,[2] whom I have known and loved since he was an Eton boy, is continually reminding me that the doors of Hinchingbrooke are ever open to his own and his mother's friend.

OSSINGTON

It had been a long promise that I should pay a summer visit to Ossington in Nottinghamshire, the residence of my good friends, Evelyn Denison, Speaker of the House of Commons, and his wife, Lady Charlotte, *née* Bentinck.[3] Shortly after my return from Madeira, I proceeded on my way thither with the delightful prospect of meeting Lady Waterford,[4] the Duc and Duchesse d'Aumale, their son,[5] and my old friend Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford.

It was proposed that this should essentially be a riding party, and the chief aim and object of our excursions was devoted to showing their Royal Highnesses the sylvan beauties of Sherwood. Accordingly, one morning after breakfast, we repaired, in a carriage and four, equipped for riding, to a wayside inn, on the

[1] Daughter of the first Earl of Ellesmere.

[2] Edward, eighth Earl of Sandwich.

[3] Daughter of the fourth Duke of Portland.

[4] Louisa, daughter of Lord Stuart de Rothesay, widow of the third Marquis of Waterford.

[5] Prince de Condé.

precincts of the forest, and mounting our horses, took our way through the beautiful glades, where Robin Hood disported himself of old. My especial cavalier on that occasion was the Prince de Condé, a youth of rare promise, of intellectual gifts and gentle courtesy, whom I dubbed my *preux chevalier*, and whose untimely death we were all ere long called upon to mourn. The Duke and Duchess rode chiefly with our host, while Lord Stanley[1] and the Bishop joined first one and then the other group of our cavalcade. We halted at the door of Earl Manvers, and did ample justice to the mid-day banquet, which he and his amiable Countess had prepared for the visitors from Ossington. Then remounting, we prosecuted our pilgrimage through the forest to all the haunts (according to legendary law) of the noble outlaw; during the whole of our ride, having galloped over a wide expanse of turf, we had scarcely heard the sound of our horses hoofs, as the dear Speaker proudly remarked to us, till we once more reached the inn and re-entered our carriage.

Will the Duc d'Aumale, if ever he honours these pages with a perusal, accept this lowly acknowledgment of one, on whose memory the delights of his conversation and the graciousness of his manner are indelibly impressed; and who recalls with gratitude the time of waiting at that wayside inn, which was whiled away by pleasant narratives from the lips of the good Duchess.

ASHRIDGE

ASHRIDGE is one of the finest parks in England, rich in magnificent timber trees, more especially tall and stately beech, which are the glory of the surrounding country. The estate originally belonged to the Duke of Bridgwater, and was brought into the possession of the Cust family by the paternal grandmother of the

[1] The fifteenth Earl of Derby.

present owner, the daughter and heiress of Sir Abraham Home. It was nearly passing out of the family some years ago, when a complicated lawsuit took place, and would almost inevitably have done so, had it not been for the untiring zeal, clear head and sound judgment of the young Earl's mother,[1] who supplied all the leading lawyers of the day with the requisite information in a most puzzling and entangled case.

It was on the occasion of her brother's[2] marriage with the beautiful Theodosia Vyner,[3] that Lady Marian, who presided as hostess during her son's minority, threw open the gardens, pleasure-grounds and park to a large and numerous assemblage of friends and acquaintance, consisting for the most part of the *élite* of London society. It was a beautiful summer's day, and at the two then equi-distant stations of Berkhampstead and Tring innumerable conveyances were in waiting to convey the guests to the scene of festivity. My brother Cavendish[4] and I chose Tring as our halting-place, and were fortunate in so doing, as the entrance from that side is perhaps the more picturesque of the two.

The description of most garden parties is likely to bear much similarity, but certainly this was a most brilliant scene, for London was in the height of the season, though not sufficiently advanced to interfere with the freshness and fashion of the ladies' toilettes. There was a great preponderance of beauty, amongst whom little Florence Paget[5] looked especially lovely, flitting in and out among the flower-beds, whose brightness she seemed to have borrowed in the hues of her costume and the brilliancy of her whole aspect. That was my first introduction to

[1] Lady Marian Alford, eldest daughter of the second Marquis of Northampton.

[2] Charles, third Marquis of Northampton; born 1816; died 1859.

[3] He married Theodosia Vyner, daughter of Henry Vyner, Esq., and Lady Mary de Gray. She died in 1864.

[4] Cavendish Spencer Boyle; born 1814; died 1868.

[5] Lady Florence Paget, daughter of Henry, second Marquess of Anglesey; married first the fourth Marquis of Hastings, and secondly Sir George Chetwynd, Bart.

ASHRIDGE.

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stately Ashridge, which was henceforth destined to become a real home to me.

I know not how, at this moment, when my loss is so recent, to attempt the slightest record of the friend[1]—the word is an old-fashioned one, but is there another to supersede it?—the benefactress, the *confidante*, of so long a period. She was undoubtedly one of the most gifted beings I ever encountered. "What she did still bettered what was done. . . ."

WREST PARK

THIS magnificent dwelling, now in possession of Earl Cowper, K.G., but at the time of which I am writing, was the residence of his mother,[2] who inherited it from Earl de Grey,[3] her father. The estate of Wrest, together with the fine mansion in St James's Square, London, devolved on the above-mentioned nobleman on the death of his aunt, Countess de Grey. This house of Wrest in Bedfordshire he pulled down and rebuilt according to his own designs in the style of a French chateau. The pictures which adorn the walls were painted expressly for him; the tapestry which lends so rich a colouring to the interior of Wrest was woven under Lord de Grey's immediate direction in the *atéliers* of the Gobelins; while the rich gilding, cornices, and ceilings were all executed under his supervision, and do the greatest credit to his taste and ingenuity. He also supplemented the plans and enlarged the ornamentation of the already beautiful gardens and pleasure-grounds which surround the house. It was also from the ingenious design of Lord de Grey that the charm-

[1] Lady Marian Alford, died 1888.

[2] Anne Florence, daughter of Thomas, second Earl de Grey; born 1806; died 1880.

[3] Thomas Philip, second Earl de Grey, who inherited Wrest from his aunt, Amabel, Countess de Grey.

ing little theatre was constructed, the stage of which rolled backwards and forwards at will, while two splendid portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds ornamented the proscenium.

It was my good fortune on several occasions at Wrest to form one of a pleasant company, both dramatic and social. Our hostess was one of the most agreeable and distinguished members of society, and I scarcely think I can do better than transcribe her moral portraiture, traced by the hand of one who knew her and loved her well.

"I think I can sum up Lady Cowper's leading attributes in three words—wit, wisdom, and goodness. In the relationship of daughter, wife, and mother, she left nothing to be desired; as a hostess she was pre-eminently agreeable, being a most delightful companion; she had lived with all that was politically and socially distinguished in her day, and had read all that was worth reading in modern literature. She derived keen enjoyment from the 'give and take' of discussion; her opinions were decided, and their expression fresh and spontaneous; into whatever well it was lowered the bucket invariably came up full." In her later days, even under the pressure of failing health, her conversational powers never flagged; she was most brilliant in the freshness of morning, and shone conspicuously at the breakfast table, thereby rendering that repast far more animated than is usually the case. Her sallies, though never ill-natured, were often unexpected and startling, which added a zest to her conversation.

For two or three years running we had theatrical performances, our *dramatis personæ* including Mr Henry Greville,[1] Mr and Mrs Sartoris,[2] Lady Alice Egerton,[3] Mrs Leslie,[4] Lord Hamilton[5] and others.

[1] Henry Greville, son of Mr Charles and Lady Charlotte Greville.

[2] Adelaide Kemble and her husband.

[3] Now Alice, Countess of Strafford, widow of the third Earl of Strafford.

[4] Now Lady Constance Leslie, wife of Sir John Leslie, and sister of the fourth Earl of Portarlington.

[5] Present Duke of Abercorn.

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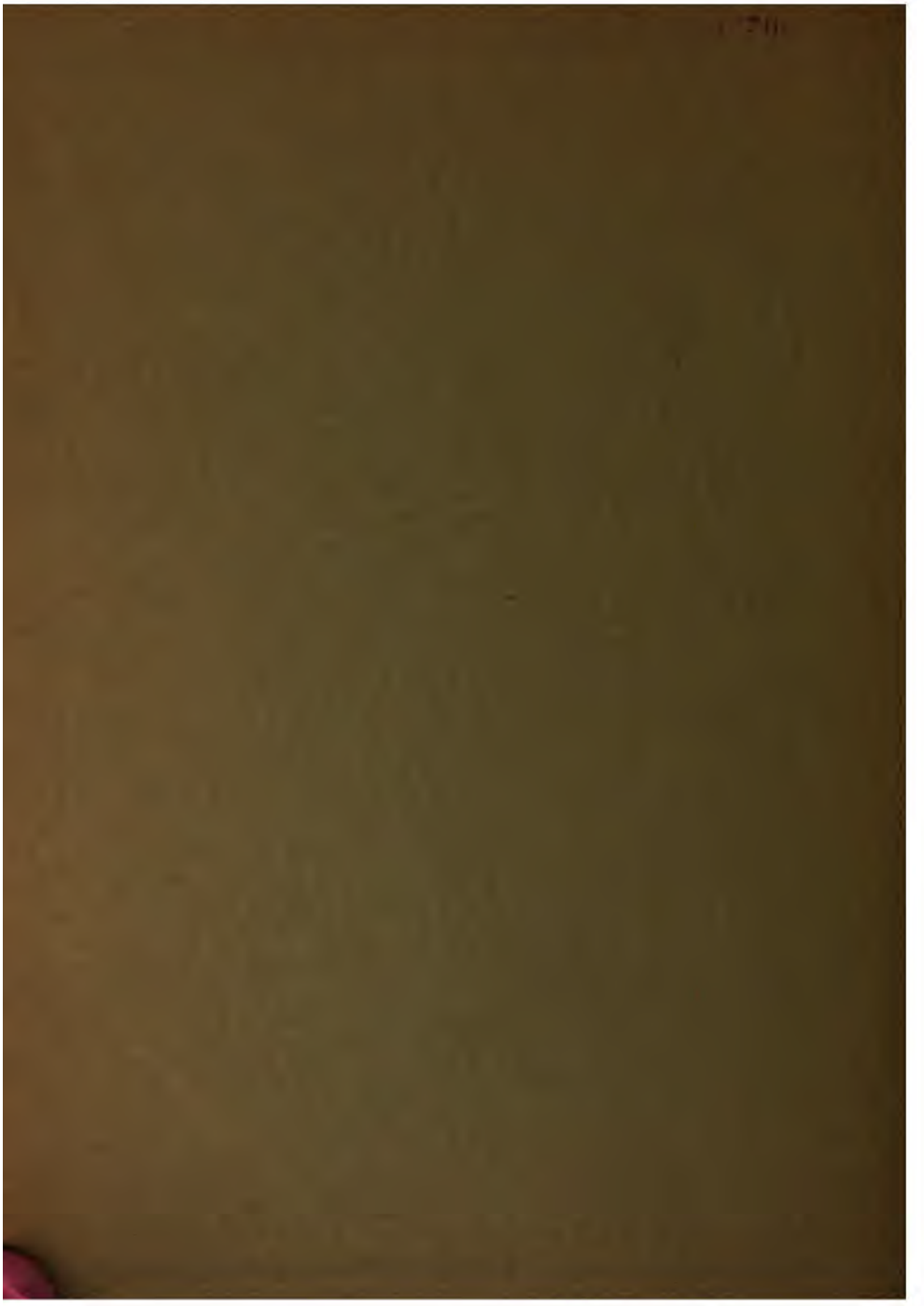
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